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Security Council

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# Letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, M. Javad Zarif, regarding the extremely appalling situation in Yemen and the urgent need to pursue the already proposed four-point plan with a view to reaching a political solution to this tragic crisis (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

17-20078 (E) 151117

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## Annex to the letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your urgent attention to the extremely appalling situation in Yemen, caused by aggression, indiscriminate targeting of civilians and a blockade, imposing intolerable suffering on the Yemeni people and resulting in an unprecedented famine and the outbreak and spread of cholera in that country.

The war in Yemen, now in its third year, continues to worsen, with no end in sight. The circumstances are pugnaciously swirling into a pandemonium of mass destruction and calamitous human suffering, while the war of aggression itself has become a quagmire for its initiators. Over 30 months of aggression against an already impoverished Yemen has claimed thousands of lives of civilians, in particular women and children, and brought about the destruction of Yemen's civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, roads, food factories and power plants, thus depriving civilians of their most basic necessities. The blocking of humanitarian access to an already famine-stricken Yemen and the decision to "close all Yemeni air, sea and land ports" have caused further deterioration of the humanitarian nightmare in Yemen, which, as described recently by United Nations officials, could lead to "the largest famine the world has seen for many decades".

International accountability for committing war crimes and violating international humanitarian law falls upon the perpetrators, who have sought and continue to seek a military solution for this crisis, notwithstanding their attempts to shift the blame and distract attention from their war of aggression. However, after more than two and a half years of blind attacks, the war's initiators should have realized by now that "there is no military solution for Yemen".

It is the duty of the international community to become more responsibly and effectively engaged in ending the senseless war and establishing a ceasefire, ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance and eventually restoring permanent peace in this country through dialogue and national reconciliation without preconditions. The Islamic Republic of Iran has emphasized, from the beginning of this crisis, that the only way to restore peace and stability is to allow all Yemeni parties to establish, without any foreign interference, their own inclusive national unity government.

I believe that it is long overdue to consider and implement the four-point plan that I proposed in my letter of 17 April 2015, addressed to your predecessor and contained in document S/2015/263, right after the Saudi-led coalition initiated war on Yemen. Today, the same plan, which includes the following, remains applicable and indeed imperative in order to end this nightmare:

1. Ceasefire and an immediate end to all military operations.
2. Unimpeded urgent humanitarian and medical assistance to the people of Yemen.
3. Resumption of Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned national dialogue, with the participation of the representatives of all political parties and social groups.
4. Establishment of an inclusive national unity government.

I am confident that you will urgently use your good offices to help make the necessary arrangements for conducting consultations with all concerned parties and expeditiously initiate a genuine dialogue to explore a political solution to this tragic crisis. In advancing this objective, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran

stands ready to continue to assist you and engage with you and all other relevant stakeholders in a meaningful dialogue so as to pursue and operationalize this peace plan. We also express our readiness to work with the United Nations in order to promptly dispatch the necessary humanitarian and medical assistance to the people in need in Yemen.

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**

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# Report of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the deputy representative and the alternate representative of Japan on the Security Council

Pursuant to rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Secretary-General wishes to report that he has received a letter dated 1 November 2017 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan stating that Mr. Toshiya Hoshino has been appointed deputy representative of Japan and Mr. Tatsuhiko Furumoto has been appointed alternate representative of Japan on the Security Council.

In the opinion of the Secretary-General, that letter constitutes adequate provisional credentials.

17-20084 (E) 151117

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## United States of America: draft resolution

*The Security Council*,

*Recalling* its previous resolutions and its presidential statements on the situation in Sudan and South Sudan, and in particular, resolutions 1990 (2011), 2024 (2011), 2032 (2011), 2046 (2012), 2047 (2012), 2075 (2012), 2104 (2013), 2126 (2013), 2156 (2014), 2179 (2014), 2205 (2015), 2230 (2015), 2251 (2015), 2287 (2016), 2318 (2016), and 2352 (2017) as well as presidential statements S/PRST/2012/19 and S/PRST/2013/14, and the Council's press statements of 18 June 2012, 21 September 2012, 28 September 2012, 6 May 2013, 14 June 2013, 14 February 2014, 17 March 2014, 11 December 2014, and 27 November 2015,

*Reaffirming* its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Sudan and South Sudan, and to the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and recalling the importance of the principles of good neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation,

*Reiterating* that the territorial boundaries of States shall not be altered by force, and that any territorial disputes shall be settled exclusively by peaceful means, *affirming* the priority it attaches to the full and urgent implementation of all outstanding issues from the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and *underscoring* that the future status of Abyei shall be resolved by negotiations between the parties in a manner consistent with the CPA and not by the unilateral actions of either party,

*Recalling* the commitments made by the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan in the 20 June 2011 Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area, the 29 June 2011 Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Government of South Sudan on Border Security and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM), and the 30 July 2011 Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission between the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan, as well as the 27 September 2012 Agreements on Cooperation and Security Arrangements, the JPSM's 8 March 2013 decision, and the Implementation Matrix of 12 March 2013, reached by the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), as well as the extraordinary meetings of the JPSM in October 2015 and May 2017 and the ordinary session of the JPSM in June 2016 and October 2017,

*Encouraging* progress on improving bilateral relations between Sudan and South Sudan, and *stressing the need* for regular meetings of the JPSM and other joint mechanisms, including the Joint Border Commission and Joint Demarcation Committee, to enable dialogue and coordination on matters of border security, and



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recognizing cooperation between Sudan and South Sudan on refugees, humanitarian corridors, and trade,

*Urging* the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to reinvigorate progress towards implementing the Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area as set out in the 20 June 2011 Agreement,

*Expressing* its full support for the efforts of the African Union on the situation between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, in order to ease the current tension, facilitate the resumption of negotiations on post-secession relations and the normalization of their relations, and *stressing* the importance of the African Union's continued engagement,

*Reaffirming* its previous resolutions 1265 (1999), 1296 (2000), 1674 (2006), 1738 (2006), 1894 (2009) 2175 (2014) and 2222 (2015) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict; 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014) and 2223 (2015) on children and armed conflict; 1502 (2003) on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel; and 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), and 2242 (2015) on women, peace and security,

*Stressing* the need for effective human rights monitoring and reporting, including of any sexual and gender-based violence and violations and abuses committed against women and children, *taking note* that there have been no developments with regard to the operationalization of human rights monitoring in the Abyei Area, and *reiterating* its concern at the lack of cooperation by the parties with the Secretary-General to this end,

*Recalling* that its resolution 2086 (2013) reiterates the importance, when establishing and renewing the mandates of United Nations Missions, of including provisions on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in post-conflict situations and on children and armed conflict, and *emphasizing* that persistent barriers to full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and subsequent resolutions on women, peace, and security, including 2242 (2015), will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's empowerment, participation, and human rights, and through concerted leadership, consistent information and action, and support, to build women's engagement in all levels of decision-making,

*Acknowledging* the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan's acceptance at the 13–14 October 2015 JPSM meeting of the map presented by the AUHIP in November 2011 relating to the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ), their agreement that the centreline is only the location of the separation line between armed forces, as well as the parties' agreement to activate all mechanisms relating to the JPSM as provided for in relevant agreements, and *encouraging* the parties to delineate or agree on the coordinates of, and demilitarize the SDBZ, including the "14 Mile Area", and to fully implement the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), in accordance with Security Council resolution 2046 (2012) and the AUPSC Roadmap of 24 April 2012, and *underlining* the importance of fully establishing and maintaining effective JBVMM monitoring of the SDBZ, including the "14 Mile Area", and *further urging* the parties to cooperate in allowing the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to fulfil its responsibility to provide security for the JBVMM's mission to monitor the SDBZ,

*Recalling* its decision in resolution 2352 (2017) to end the mandate for support to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) unless both parties demonstrate through their actions clear commitment and steadfast guarantees for the implementation of the JBVMM, in line with steps outlined in paragraph 7 of

resolution 2352 (2017), including resuming border demarcation discussions, holding regular meetings of the JPSM, and granting UNISFA full freedom of movement,

*Recognizing* some progress by the parties since May 2017 but *regretting* the lack of significant concrete progress made by both parties on achieving the benchmarks for the JBVMM and the unnecessary impediments imposed upon the JBVMM, reducing its ability to effectively monitor the SDBZ,

*Noting with concern* the absence of local institutions to manage the Abyei Area and encouraging continued progress in convening Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) meetings,

*Recognizing* the importance of regular dialogue between the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan, *recalling* the United Nations Security Council decision in resolution 2046 (2012) that the parties must resume immediately negotiations to reach agreement on Abyei's final status under the auspices of the AUHIP, *calling upon* all parties to engage constructively in the process mediated by the AUHIP towards final agreement on the final status of the Abyei Area, and *stressing* that the parties must immediately implement pending aspects of the 20 June 2011 Agreement, in particular to resolve the dispute over the Abyei Area Agreement, and to resolve the dispute over the Abyei Area Council, and immediately establish the Abyei Area Administration and Abyei Police Service,

*Stressing* that both countries and communities will have much to gain if they show restraint and choose the path of dialogue instead of resorting to violence or provocations,

*Commending* the continued assistance provided to the parties by the AUHIP, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan, and UNISFA,

*Further commending* the efforts of UNISFA in effectively carrying out its mandate, including by its ongoing facilitation of peaceful migration throughout the Abyei Area, conflict prevention, mediation and deterrence, and *expressing its deep appreciation* for the work of the troop-contributing countries, and *strongly underscoring* the unacceptability of any attack on United Nations personnel, including the firing on UNISFA patrols in early 2017 by unknown assailants, and *reiterating* that such attacks should be swiftly and thoroughly investigated, and that those responsible should be held to account,

*Taking note* of the security situation in the Abyei Area as characterized by the 17 October 2017 Secretary-General's report (S/2017/870), and *acknowledging* UNISFA's contribution to enhanced peace and stability since its deployment and expressing its determination to prevent the recurrence of violence against or displacements of civilians and to avert intercommunal conflict,

*Reiterating its deep concern* regarding the public administration and rule of law vacuum in the Abyei Area, due to continued delays in the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and Council and Police, including a special unit to deal with particular issues related to nomadic migration, which are essential to maintain law and order and prevent intercommunal conflict in Abyei, and in this regard, *welcoming* U[illegible]'s efforts to support and strengthen community protection committees [illegible] continue engaging with both governments on this issue,

*Noting with concern* the continued delay in establishing the temporary institutions [illegible] resolving the final status of Abyei and that the continued threat of intercommunal violence contributes to heightened tensions in the Abyei Area,

including those ongoing tensions that prevent UNISFA's and other agencies' Sudanese staff from returning to Abyei,

*Urging* all parties to refrain from any unilateral action that could aggravate intercommunal relations within the Abyei Area, *expressing concern* over the continued implications of what the AUPSC described in their 6 November 2013 press statement as "the decision by the Ngok Dinka to conduct a unilateral referendum" and also in this context, taking note that the Government of Sudan proceeded with its April 2015 national elections in Abyei,

*Bearing in mind* the current humanitarian situation in which humanitarian actors continue to provide assistance to 100,000 people in the Abyei Area and the importance of coherence of United Nations assistance in the region, and *further stressing* the urgency of facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all affected populations,

*Affirming* the importance of voluntary, safe, dignified return and sustainable reintegration of displaced persons, and of peaceful and orderly migration cycles respecting the traditional migratory routes from Sudan to South Sudan through Abyei, and urging UNISFA to continue to take measures as necessary to ensure security in the Abyei Area in accordance with its mandate,

*Recalling* its resolution 2117 (2013), and expressing grave concern at the threat to peace and security in Abyei arising from the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, *welcoming* the completion of infrastructure, systems, and policy for weapons confiscation, storage and destruction, and *calling on* UNISFA to ensure adequate protection of this infrastructure,

*Expressing* concern about the residual threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war in the Abyei Area, which hinders the safe return of displaced persons to their homes, safe migration, and livelihood activities,

*Taking note* of the 28 July 2017 and 17 October 2017 Secretary-General's reports (S/2017/649 and S/2017/870), including the Secretary-General's call on the parties to consolidate the gains achieved by UNISFA at the local level by actively engaging in efforts to establish the Abyei Area Administration and Council, and to constitute the Abyei Area Police,

*Recalling* that the Security Council welcomed in resolution 2205 (2015) the decision of the Secretary-General to appoint a civilian head of mission,

*Recognizing* that the current situation in Abyei and along the border between the Sudan and South Sudan continues to constitute a serious threat to international peace and security,

1. *Decides* to extend until 15 May 2018 the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) as set out in paragraph 2 of resolution 1990 (2011) and acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, *further decides* to extend until 15 May 2018 the tasks of UNISFA as set out in paragraph 3 of resolution 1990 (2011);

2. *Decides* to extend until 15 April 2018 UNISFA's mandate modification set forth in resolution 2024 (2011) and paragraph 1 of resolution 2075 (2012), and further *decides* that this shall be the final such extension unless the parties take the specific measures described in paragraph 9;

3. *Decides* to maintain the authorized troop ceiling of 4,791 until 15 April 2018, and further *decides* that as of 15 April 2018, the authorized troop ceiling shall decrease to 4,235, unless it decides to extend the mandate modification set forth in

resolution 2024 (2012) and paragraph 1 of resolution 2075 (2012), in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 9;

4. *Underscores* that continued cooperation between the Government of Sudan and Government of South Sudan is also critical for peace, security and stability and the future relations between them;

5. *Further reiterates* its demand that Sudan and South Sudan urgently commence the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and Council, including by resolving the deadlock over the composition of the Council, and constitute the Abyei Police Service, to enable it to take over policing functions throughout the Abyei Area, including the protection of oil infrastructure, in accordance with their commitments in the 20 June 2011 Agreement;

6. *Urges* the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to resume direct negotiations in order to urgently agree on a final settlement of the Abyei question, *calls upon* the parties to take concrete confidence-building measures to contribute to achieving this objective with renewed support from the AUHIP, *encourages* the AUHIP and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to continue coordinating efforts towards calling for full implementation of the 2011 agreements;

7. *Takes note of* AJOC meetings in May and November 2017, *urges* the implementation of AJOC decisions and the 20 June 2011 Agreement, *recalls* the need for African Union initiatives to support this goal and *encourages* its renewed engagement, and *requests* the Secretary-General to provide an assessment of progress on these issues in his regular reports;

8. *Expresses* serious concern regarding the delays to fully operationalize the JBVMM, *recalls* the Secretary-General's benchmarks and recommendations regarding JBVMM operations, *takes note* that continued investment in achieving full operational capability of the JBVMM should be based on a set of conditions, including resolution of the dispute over the SDBZ, and *calls upon* the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan to make timely and effective use of the JBVMM, JPSM and other agreed joint mechanisms to ensure the security and transparency of the SDBZ, including the "14 Mile Area";

9. *Determines* to consider renewing UNISFA's mandate to support the JBVMM should both parties adhere to the specific measures agreed to in the May and October 2017 JPSM communiques no later than 15 March 2018, to include completing inter alia:

(1) Facilitating the full freedom of movement for UNISFA air and ground patrols, to include landing within the SDBZ, by approving 100 percent of requested sorties no later than 72 hours after the requests are delivered,

(2) Opening of Phase I of the border crossing corridors,

(3) Holding at least one meeting to resume border demarcation discussions, including negotiations on the disputed areas within the framework of the signed agreements, welcomes the African Union Commission's efforts in this regard and encourages its continued assistance to the parties,

(4) Reactivating the ad hoc committee of the 14 mile area,

(5) Facilitating the operationalization of the four JBVMM team sites, and,

(6) Convening at least two meetings of the JPSM to resolve these issues;

10. *Urges* renewed efforts to determine conclusively the SDBZ centreline on the ground, and *reiterates* that the centreline of the SDBZ in no way prejudices the

current or future legal status of the border, ongoing negotiations on the disputed and claimed areas, and demarcation of the borders;

11. *Underscores* that UNISFA's protection of civilians mandate as set out in paragraph 3 of resolution 1990 (2011) includes taking the necessary actions to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source of such violence, and commending UNISFA's efforts in that regard;

12. *Condemns* the intermittent presence of South Sudan security service personnel and the deployment of Diffra Oil Police units in the Abyei Area, in violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement, as well as any entry of armed militias into the territory, and *reiterates* its demands that immediately and without preconditions the Government of South Sudan fully redeploy its security service personnel from the Abyei Area and that the Government of Sudan redeploy the Oil Police in Diffra from the Abyei Area, and *further reiterates*, in accordance with relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 1990 (2011) and resolution 2046 (2012), that the Abyei Area shall be demilitarized from any forces, as well as armed elements of the local communities, other than UNISFA and the Abyei Police Service;

13. *Supports* the AJOC's 3 May 2013 and 30 March 2015 decisions on Abyei's status as a weapons-free area, *underscores* the AUPSC's concern in its 7 May 2013 Communiqué over reports that various communities living in Abyei are heavily armed, *recalls* that the 20 June 2011 Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area stipulates that Abyei should be a weapons-free area and that only UNISFA is authorized to carry weapons inside the area, and in this regard, *urges* the two Governments to take all necessary steps to ensure that Abyei is effectively demilitarized, including through disarmament programs as necessary;

14. *Reaffirms* that UNISFA may undertake weapons confiscation and destruction in the Abyei Area as authorized under resolution 1990 (2011), consistent with its mandate and within its existing capabilities, in coordination with the signatories of the June 2011 Agreement on the Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area, the AJOC, and the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities and consistent with the previous AJOC decision to establish the Area as a "weapons free area", and *reiterates* its request that UNISFA, observe, document and report on the movement of weapons into Abyei and the presence, destruction and confiscation of weapons within Abyei as part of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle;

15. *Requests* UNISFA to continue its dialogue with the AJOC and with the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities on effective strategies and oversight mechanisms for ensuring full compliance by all relevant parties with Abyei's status as a weapons-free area, with a particular priority placed on the urgent elimination of heavy or crew-served weapons, as well as rocket-propelled grenades, and *calls upon* the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan, the AJOC, and the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities to extend full cooperation to UNISFA in this regard;

16. *Urges* the two Governments immediately to take steps to implement confidence-building measures among the respective communities in the Abyei Area, ensuring women are involved at all stages, including through reconciliation processes at the grass-roots level as well as through support for the ongoing efforts of non-governmental organizations engaging in peacebuilding, and by fully supporting UNISFA's efforts in promoting community dialogue, *strongly welcomes* continued engagement between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities, and *strongly urges* all Abyei communities to exercise maximum restraint in all their engagements and to desist from inflammatory acts or statements that may lead to violent clashes;

17. *Underscores* that women's participation at all levels of inter-community dialogue is critical to ensure a credible and legitimate process and calls upon all parties to promote full and equal participation of women;

18. *Welcomes* the positive developments at the grass-roots level between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities, particularly their noted commitment to reconciliation and cooperation, as demonstrated by the resumption of trading activities and the monitoring of stolen property and livestock, including the prompt return of or provision of compensation for stolen property to victims of crime;

19. *Welcomes* UNISFA initiatives, to support community dialogue and efforts by the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities to strengthen inter-communal relationships and facilitate stability and reconciliation in the Abyei Area, including the facilitation of joint peace committee meetings between both communities and re-opening of a common market;

20. *Welcomes* UNISFA's continued efforts, within existing capabilities and resources, and in close coordination with the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, to strengthen the capacities of Community Protection Committees in order to assist with management of law and order processes in Abyei and to continue engaging with both governments on this issue;

21. *Calls upon* all parties to cooperate fully with the findings and recommendations following the Abyei Area Joint Investigation and Inquiry Committee's investigation into the killing of a UNISFA peacekeeper and the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief, *welcomes* the 24 March 2015 AUPSC press statement requesting the AU Commission to engage the parties on the findings and recommendations, and *reiterates* the need to enable the two communities to find closure on the assassination of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief, bearing in mind the need to promote stability and reconciliation in the Abyei Area;

22. *Expresses* its intention to continue reviewing as appropriate the mandate of UNISFA for possible reconfiguration of the force in light of the compliance by Sudan and South Sudan with the decisions set forth in resolution 2046 (2012) and their commitments as set forth in the Agreements of 20 June, 29 June, 30 July 2011 and 27 September 2012, including the redeployment of all forces from the SDBZ, achieving full operational capability for the JBVMM and the Ad Hoc Committees, as well as completing the full demilitarization of the Abyei Area;

23. *Calls upon* all Member States, in particular Sudan and South Sudan, to ensure the free, unhindered and expeditious movement, to and from Abyei and throughout the SDBZ, of all personnel, as well as equipment, provisions, supplies and other goods, including vehicles, aircraft, and spare parts, which are for the exclusive and official use of UNISFA;

24. *Renews* its call upon the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to provide full support to the United Nations, including by promptly issuing visas to military, police and civilian United Nations personnel, including humanitarian personnel, without prejudice to their nationality, for entry into Sudan and South Sudan, facilitating basing arrangements, infrastructure construction, including the Athony airport, in the Mission Area and flight clearances, and providing logistical support, *calls upon* the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to facilitate travel from within Sudan and South Sudan to and from Abyei, and *further calls upon* all parties to fully adhere to their obligations under the Status of Forces Agreements;

25. *Recognizes* that the absence of development projects and the inability to deliver basic government services has had an adverse effect on Abyei populations and *calls upon* the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan, as well as donors to support reconstruction and capacity-building;

26. *Demands* that the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan continue to facilitate the deployment of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to ensure freedom of movement, as well as the identification and clearance of mines in the Abyei Area and SDBZ;

27. *Further demands* that all parties involved allow all humanitarian personnel full, safe and unhindered access to civilians in need of assistance and all necessary facilities for their operations, in accordance with international law, including applicable international humanitarian law, and United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance;

28. *Strongly urges* that all parties cease all forms of violence, human rights violations and abuses, violations of international humanitarian law, and violations and abuses against children in violation of applicable international law;

29. *Urges* UNISFA to make rapid progress on deploying a Women and Child Protection Advisor;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that effective human rights monitoring is carried out, and the results included in his reports to the Council, and reiterates its call upon the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan to extend their full cooperation to the Secretary-General to this end, including by issuing visas to the concerned United Nations personnel;

31. *Recalls* resolution 2272 (2016) and *further requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure full compliance of UNISFA with the United Nations zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to keep the Council fully informed through his regular country-specific reports to the Council about UNISFA's progress in this regard, including with respect to the implementation of resolution 2272 (2016);

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to inform the Council of progress in implementing UNISFA's mandate, including reporting on any steps taken per paragraph 9, in one written report, no later than 1 April 2018 and continue to bring to the Council's immediate attention any serious violations of the above referenced Agreements;

33. *Notes* the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure close cooperation among United Nations missions in the region, including UNISFA, the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as well as his Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, and requests that he continue this practice;

34. *Decides* to remain actively seized of this matter.

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Security Council

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15 November 2017
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**Identical letters dated 12 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

On instructions from my Government, and further to our numerous previous letters informing you of the barbarous crimes committed by the "international coalition" led by the United States of America, and that coalition's systematic attacks against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and against innocent Syrian civilians, I should like to draw to your attention the following:

The United States-led international coalition is continuing with its serious attacks on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, which have been going on ever since that coalition commenced its illegal operations on 23 September 2014. That internationally illegitimate renegade coalition has added a new bloody massacre to its long record of massacres, war crimes and crimes against humanity. On 11 November 2017, its warplanes attacked residential areas in the Tall al-Shayir area and the village of Al-Du'ayji in Dayr al-Zawr governorate, killing over a dozen civilians, injuring dozens more, and causing significant material damage to property and homes. That illegitimate coalition alliance was evidently not content with that heinous crime alone. Its warplanes went on to attack a vehicle carrying emergency personnel on their way to save the lives of injured civilians, killing all the occupants and destroying the vehicle completely.

The international coalition is pressing on with its efforts to undermine the victories scored by the Syrian Arab Army and its allies against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) organization, whether through its warplanes and proxies on the ground, or through the deals it strikes with the ISIL terrorist organization to launch attacks on the Syrian Arab Army and its allies from areas under the control of that illegitimate coalition and its client militias on the ground. Such actions merely serve to confirm the suspicious role being played by that coalition and the threat that it poses to genuine efforts against the ISIL terrorist organization being conducted by the Syrian Arab Army and its allies. That is the reality confirmed by events on the ground, numerous reports and aerial photographs.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic expresses its strong condemnation of the attacks, war crimes and crimes against humanity being perpetrated by the international coalition against Syrian civilians. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also protests the fact that so many of the parties that trumpet their devotion to the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law should close their eyes to the massacres being perpetrated by the

coalition in Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr governorates. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regards the failure by the Governments of certain member States of that coalition to dissociate themselves from the crimes being committed by that coalition in their names to be equivalent to active complicity in the commission of those crimes and massacres.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic renews its call on the Security Council to fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, to take immediate action to put a stop to the barbaric crimes being committed by this illegitimate coalition against innocent civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic, and to prevent the commission of further crimes and attacks against the Syrian people and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2017/953

Security Council

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14 November 2017
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## Letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I write in response to your letter dated 19 September 2017 and to which is annexed a letter dated 12 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/791).

Egypt would like to reaffirm the following:

- We reject all the claims that the Permanent Representative of the Sudan made in his letter. They are all completely baseless, including the allegation that the Hala'ib triangle is Sudanese and is being occupied by Egypt. We furthermore reject the claims of the Sudan that international humanitarian law is applicable to and that there have been human rights violations in those areas, including, as the Permanent Representative claims, detentions and expulsions.

- I should like to reaffirm what I have stated in previous letters. All the areas north of the 22nd parallel of latitude referenced in the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan are Egyptian lands that are part the national territory and the population of which are Egyptian nationals. The attempts of the Sudan to raise doubts regarding Egyptian sovereignty over those areas are merely groundless claims that are not consonant with a sound legal assessment of the temporary administrative arrangements that were granted to the Sudan pursuant to internal administrative decisions that were taken by the Egyptian Minister of the Interior during period of condominium.

- All of the foreigners who were detained (including Sudanese and Syrian citizens and persons of other nationalities) had entered that area by surreptitiously and illegally crossing the international border, and had illegally been mining gold and other minerals without authorization from the competent national authorities. This is a clear violation of the relevant Egyptian laws. Per official documents, the detainees were charged with failing to cross the international border via an official entry/exit point and engaging in illegal mining activities. They were not accused of any of the offences mistakenly cited in the letter of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan.

- There is no doubt that the accused Sudanese nationals were arrested in Egyptian territory, that is to say outside their country of nationality, the Sudan. Some of them applied for refugee status in Egypt and, in that connection, contacted the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cairo. On the other hand, several other of the arrested individuals



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had documents issued by UNHCR showing that they either had applied for refugee status or had been designated refugees. It is certain that they are not inhabitants of that area and that they do not wish return to the Sudan for reasons related to their application for refugee status.

- It is also a documented fact that the rest of the accused Sudanese nationals are neither from or inhabitants of the Hala'ib area. They live in various areas of the Sudan, including Khartoum, Darfur, Fashir, Nayala and Atbarah. After legal and judicial procedures had been completed, we attempted to hand over the infiltrators to the Sudanese authorities, but the Sudanese Government refused to accept them.

- Under international law, States have the right to control their borders and prevent illegal infiltration. In fact, controlling borders and preventing infiltration is a duty of the State and part of its international undertaking to counter organized transborder crime, human trafficking, illegal migration, terrorism and smuggling. Moreover, all the measures that have been taken by the Egyptian authorities in these areas are in keeping with the fulfilment of its obligations and the exercise of its authorities.

- Egypt calls on the Sudanese authorities to take the measures required to control the two countries' international border (the 22nd parallel of latitude) and prevent Sudanese individuals from infiltrating Egyptian territory and engaging in illegal mining activities. Egypt reserves the right to take all the measures required to protect its interests and nationals in those border areas, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Amr Abdellatif **Aboulatta**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2017/954

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 November 2017

Original: English

**Letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to forward to you a list of the 13 remaining prisoners of war held in Eritrean prisons (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohamed Siad **Doualeh**

17-20259 (E) 161117

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## Annex to the letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

**Djibouti prisoners of war in the hands of Eritrea**

1. Mohammed Youssouf Oudoum
2. Djama Ahmed Abrar
3. Hassan Elmi Had
4. Hoche Ofleh Kochin
5. Abdourahman Mahamoud Farah
6. Aden Ali Ahmed
7. Houssein Ibrahim Mohamed
8. Ali Gohar Gaditto
9. Awaleh Abdi Omar
10. Kamil Youssouf Ali
11. Meiraneh Ali Bock
12. Abdillah Daher Said
13. Houssein Hassan Houmed

**Escaped**

1. Ahmed Eleyeh Yabeh
2. Kadir Soumboul Ali

**Released**

1. Osman Mohamoud Ahmed
2. Cheiko Borito Ali
3. Ali Abdallah Loubak
4. Mahamoud Hildid Sougoueh

United Nations S/2017/955

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 November 2017

Original: English

# Report of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the alternate representatives of the United States of America on the Security Council

Pursuant to rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Secretary-General wishes to report that he has received a letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations stating that Mr. Walter Miller and Ms. Elaine French have been appointed alternate representatives of the United States on the Security Council.

In the opinion of the Secretary-General, that letter constitutes adequate provisional credentials.

17-20204 (E) 151117

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United Nations S/2017/956

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 November 2017

Original: English

**Letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of China in July 2017 (see annex).

The document was prepared by the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations, following consultations with other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Wu** Haitao
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China
to the United Nations

17-20241 (E) 291117

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## Annex to the letter dated 13 November 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

## Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of China (July 2017)

### Introduction

Under the Presidency of China in July 2017, the Security Council held 30 public meetings and informal consultations, adopted 4 resolutions and agreed on 4 presidential statements and 8 press statements.

### Africa

#### Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 6 July, at the request of France and Sweden, the Security Council held closed consultations under the item entitled "Other matters" to hear two briefings (by videoconference) by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virigina Gamba.

Some members expressed their deep concern at the seriousness of the situation in the country and strongly condemned violence against civilians and attacks on State institutions and law-enforcement personnel. Members of the Security Council called on all actors in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to refrain from committing acts of violence and called on the Government to ensure the protection of civilians and to engage in dialogue and reconciliation in the Kasai provinces. At the end of the consultations, the members of the Council agreed on elements for the press to summarize their statements.

On 11 July, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, delivered a briefing on the situation on the ground, saying that overcoming the current political impasse, rising insecurity and worsening humanitarian conditions would require the concerted effort of the Government in Kinshasa as well as regional and international actors, emphasizing the vital role of MONUSCO.

The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo briefed the members of the Council on the efforts of the Government to implement the 31 December political agreement and the adoption of measures to punish perpetrators. Members of the Council expressed their concern about the violence in the Kasaï provinces and pointed out that armed groups have been the main cause of the instability in the country. Several members insisted that the Government should hold free, fair and inclusive elections by the end of 2017, and without further delay. Several members of the Council also stressed the need to advance preparations for the election. There were also delegations that emphasized the progress in the review of electoral register, national ownership of electoral process as well as the need to respect Congolese sovereignty.

On 26 July, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/12) on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Central African Republic**

On 13 July, the Security Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/9) strongly condemning the violence by armed groups in the Central African Republic. In the statement, the Council took note of the outcomes of the meeting of the Central African Republic partners held in Brussels on 21 June, and welcomed the agreement to develop a joint road map to continue the mediation with the armed groups under the leadership of the Government, in partnership with the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation as well as international partners.

On 24 and 26 July, the Security Council issued two press statements on attacks against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

On 27 July, the Security Council heard briefings under the item entitled "Other matters" from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the work of MINUSCA and on recent developments with regard to the situation in the Central African Republic. The members of the Council condemned, in the strongest terms, the attack on MINUSCA peacekeepers in Bangassou (Mbomou prefecture) on 25 July by suspected anti-Balaka elements, which resulted in the death of two Moroccan peacekeepers and injury to another Moroccan peacekeeper, who also died two days after the attack. The Council agreement that, as the next step, the President of the Council would contact the Permanent Mission of the Central African Republic and convey its message to the authorities of the Central African Republic regarding the need to resolutely engage in the relaunch of the peace and reconciliation process as the best way to avoid attacks against MINUSCA in the future.

**West Africa**

On 13 July, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, also Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), on the recent situation in West Africa and the Sahel region. The Special Representative also presented the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the work of UNOWAS (S/2017/563). The briefing was followed by closed consultations. During the consultations, the members of the Council stressed that countries of the region faced enormous challenges, and it was thus of great importance to continue close cooperation with regional organizations such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Mano River Union, as well as other subregional groups.

On 24 July, the Security Council welcomed recent positive political developments in some West African countries, commending the work of the Special Representative as well as UNOWAS, and expressed concern over the threat of terrorism in the region, including attacks by Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) and the humanitarian situation, by issuing a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/10) on the situation of West Africa.

On 24 July, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/11) on the Liberia peacebuilding plan and upcoming presidential elections.

**South Sudan**

On 20 July, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the situation in South Sudan as well as on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, El-Ghassim Wane, and the Chairperson of the Joint

Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, His Excellency Festus Mogae, briefed the Council by videoconference.

Mr. Wane briefed the Council on the Secretary-General's 30-day report on South Sudan, as well as on the situation there. He encouraged the Council to once again express its full support for the revitalization process led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and to urge all stakeholders in South Sudan to embrace it, and underlined the importance of unity of purpose within the region, adding that the international community must send a strong message to South Sudanese leaders on all sides that the status quo was unacceptable and unsustainable.

Mr. Mogae briefed the Council on his consultations with critical stakeholders. He called on the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD to speak in one voice in their engagement with South Sudan and to encourage the parties in South Sudan to show willingness to compromise and accommodate each other.

The representative of South Sudan emphasized that the work of the National Dialogue was under way and was progressing well, and that the Government of National Unity had the political will and desire to continue to work closely with UNMISS and humanitarian actors to address any pending issues. The representative also urged the international community to honour their pledges to aid South Sudan.

Council members stressed that they had shown their support for the efforts of IGAD and the African Union, and emphasized that a political solution was the only way out of the conflict, which was one of causes of the humanitarian crisis in the world's newest nation.

During the closed consultations, some members of the Council expressed serious concerns about the delays in the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan because of the limitations imposed on the work of UNMISS as a result of the difficulties in accessing humanitarian aid, and some members emphasized the need to propose sanctions. Other members recognized the existing political, economic and humanitarian problems, but considered it necessary to emphasize the positive developments. The Council agreed on calling for an end to the violence and urging the international community to support the Transitional Government.

**Sudan**

On 24 July, the Security Council held closed consultations on the Sudan, and was briefed by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), the Permanent Representative of Ukraine, on the work of the Committee, covering the period from 27 April to 24 July 2017, including the Chair's visit to the Sudan. Council members welcomed the Chair's visit to the Sudan, which took place from 14 to 18 May 2017, and, welcoming the fact that the situation in Darfur had evolved considerably, agreed to consider the delineation of clear benchmarks for the eventual termination of the sanctions in the long term.

**Somalia and Eritrea**

On 24 July, the Security Council held closed consultations on Somalia and Eritrea, and heard a briefing by the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea on the work of Committee covering the period from April to July 2017. Members of the Council expressed concern about Al-Shabaab, which remains the most immediate threat to peace and security in Somalia, encouraged that the Chair's visit to the Horn of Africa region, which was to be carried out as soon as possible, and

called for further cooperation on the part of the Somalia and Eritrea Committee and the Monitoring Group with Somalia and Eritrea.

**Burundi**

On 26 July, at the request of the delegation of France, the Security Council held a briefing, followed by closed consultations, on the situation in Burundi. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi, Michel Kafando, and the Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Jürg Lauber, as Chair of Burundi country specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, briefed the Council members.

Mr. Kafando reported on his June visit to Burundi, and emphasized the crucial need for the Government to allow the involvement of the opposition, both in exile and inside Burundi, in the ongoing dialogue led by the East African Community. Mr. Kafando stressed that the Arusha Agreement must remain the cornerstone of all efforts, as well as the importance of calm collective action on the part of African leaders, including those within the subregion, and by the United Nations.

Mr. Lauber reported on his recent visit to the country, and emphasized that the mediation efforts being undertaken by President Yoweri Museveni and former President Benjamin Mkapa on behalf of the East African Community deserve full political and technical support. He called on the international community to continue to follow developments in Burundi and to take all aspects of the current situation into account, and suggested that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund should support the efforts in this area.

The representative of Burundi stressed that the country was calm in general, emphasized that the inter-Burundian dialogue remained on track and was not at a standstill, as some had suggested, that the domestic process had ended and that the final report submitted to the national authorities contained recommendations arising from discussions with more than 26,000 Burundians.

Council members, who noted that the security situation in the country had remained generally calm, stressed, nevertheless, that the prevailing situation in Burundi had seriously undermined the significant gains achieved through the Arusha Agreement, commended regional efforts to help Burundians find political solutions, reiterated their support for the facilitation led by former President Benjamin Mkapa, under the mediation of President Yoweri Museveni, in his capacity as Chair of the East African Community, and welcomed the active engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission as a viable platform for dialogue between Burundi and its partners.

**Libya**

On 26 July, upon the request from France, the Security Council discussed the situation in Libya under the item entitled "Other matters". France briefed to the Council on the recent meeting in Paris, on 25 July, between Faiez Serraj, President of the Presidency Council of Libya, and General Khalifa Haftar, Commander of the Libyan National Army, hosted by the President of France, and the joint declaration they had adopted. Council members expressed their support for continued political dialogue among all Libyans.

On 27 July, the Security Council issued a press statement welcoming recent efforts to strengthen an inclusive political dialogue among all Libyans, and the above-mentioned meeting between the President of the Presidency Council of Libya and the Commander of the Libyan National Army, as well as the joint declaration, which urged all Libyans to support a negotiated political solution, national reconciliation and an immediate ceasefire. The members of the Council underscored the importance of the central role of the United Nations in facilitating the Libyan-

led political dialogue, welcomed the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ghassan Salamé, and looked forward to supporting his efforts to facilitate a political solution in Libya.

**Peace and security in Africa**

On 19 July, the Council held an open debate on "Peace and security in Africa: enhancing African capacities in the areas of peace and security". The Council was briefed by the Secretary-General and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui. The Secretary-General said that the United Nations and the African Union had a shared interest in strengthening mechanisms to defuse conflicts before they escalated, and in managing them effectively when they occurred. He said, with the 19 April signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the two organizations sought to systematically work on the basis of mutual respect and comparative advantage in all stages of the conflict cycle. The Secretary-General also said that enhancing African capacities in peace and security required adequate, timely and predictable financing for the peace support operations of the African Union. Recalling the decision by African leaders, outlined in Council resolution 2320 (2016), to fund 25 per cent of those operations, he said that his report submitted pursuant to that text had included financing options.

The African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security said that his organization had mandated or authorized the deployment of more than 100,000 uniformed and civilian personnel over the last decade, a deployment that had come at a huge human cost. African troops had suffered owing to inadequate force enablers and multipliers, and gaps in the provision of financial resources. To support the capacity of African troops, he recommended that the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat establish an approach that involved real-time consultations, joint assessments and joint analysis, with a view to recommending coherent options. He stressed that the operational readiness of the African Stand-by Force must be fully supported.

In the ensuing debate, speakers highlighted the many theatres in which African troops were taking charge of conflict response, notably in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia, or were involved in regional efforts to tackle the evolving threats of piracy, cybercrime, terrorism and trafficking in humans or small arms and light weapons. Consensus was reached by the speakers that deeper cooperation between United Nations and the African Union needed to be enhanced to help promote the peacekeeping operations of the African Union. Many speakers also lamented that a lack of financing had limited the efforts of the African Union, citing Council resolution 2320 (2016) reaffirming the Council's determination to enhance peace and security cooperation between the two organizations. Some called for a successor resolution to establish a principle whereby peace operations would be financed through assessed contributions to the United Nations budget. Several speakers applauded the efforts of the African Union to take charge of the future, with the approval of a funding model for its new Peace Fund at the twenty-seventh Summit of the African Union held on 17 and 18 July 2016 in Kigali.

## Middle East

**The situation in the Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)**

On 6 July, the Security Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, and the Head of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)-United

Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, Edmond Mulet, Ms. Nakamitsu said that OPCW had informed the Council that, with the destruction of an aircraft hangar in June, it had verified the destruction of 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, and that it would continue to resolve outstanding issues regarding the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic with the Syrian Government. She said that the investigation of the 4 April attack in Khan Shaykhun conducted by the OPCW fact-finding mission had concluded that a large number of people, some of whom had died, had been exposed to sarin or a sarin-like substance used as a chemical weapon. Explaining the reason why the fact-finding mission did not visit the site of the incident, Ms. Nakamitsu said that "security risks outweighed benefits". Final substantive reports are expected in October. The Head of the Joint Investigative Mechanism said that the Mechanism had begun an investigation into the incidents involving the use of chemicals as weapons in two incidents: in Um-Housh (on 16 September 2016) and Khan Shaykhun. He appealed to all Member States to allow the Joint Mechanism to perform its work in an impartial, independent and professional manner.

After the consultations, the President of the Security Council issued press elements, which said that the Council took note of the report of the fact-finding mission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons regarding the chemical attacks in Khan Shaykhun and Um-Housh in the Syrian Arab Republic, reiterated its strong condemnation of the use of chemical weapons or chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, reiterated its support for the work of Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Joint Investigative Mechanism and looked forward to the investigation into the attacks in Khan Shaykhun and Um-Housh. The Council reiterated that there must be no impunity for use of chemical weapons or chemicals as weapons and that those responsible must be held accountable.

On 14 July, the Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on the recent developments in the political solution to the crisis. Mr. de Mistura reported on his efforts during consultations. He hailed a significant decrease in violence across the country, noted the progress in delineating de-escalation areas at the meeting held in Astana on 4 and 5 July, emphasizing the need to ensure that the de-escalation areas are a temporary measure, and highlighted the importance of preserving the national unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. He said that from 10 to 14 July, he had convened the seventh round of intra-Syrian talks in Geneva. He described incremental progress, particularly regarding the holding of joint meetings with opposition delegations before and during the last round of talks, at which common positions were identified. He conveyed his intention to push for direct engagement by the parties in the next round of talks in early September. On 13 July, France proposed the establishment of a contact group composed of permanent members of the Council and regional actors to support United Nations efforts to broker a political settlement. Members of the Council expressed their support for the mediation of the Special Envoy and the political solution to the Syrian issues. They also welcomed the announcement by the United States and the Russian Federation, along with Jordan, of a ceasefire agreement in the south-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic.

On 27 July, the Council held an open meeting and was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ursula Mueller. Ms. Mueller said that under the United Nations June/July plan, the Organization had, thus far, reached just over a third of the 1 million people who were targeted, citing a number of continuing obstacles of different types. She said that, in spite of those challenges, and the high threat to

humanitarian workers, the United Nations and its partners continued to implement humanitarian operations in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The representatives of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), the Syrian Arab Republic, Uruguay and the United States of America addressed the Council. During the closed consultations following the briefing, Members of the Council reached consensus on seeking a political solution to the Syrian crisis. Some members called for pragmatic actions by the Council to ensure the full implementation of relevant resolutions, as well as humanitarian access, while others emphasized the importance of enhancing the cooperation and coordination with the Syrian Government to expand humanitarian assistance to the country.

**The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

On 12 July, the Security Council discussed the situation in Gaza under the item entitled "Other matters". The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nicakolay Mladenov, briefed to the Council on the alarming humanitarian situation in Gaza strip, in particular the serious energy crisis. Members of the Council called for urgent action by all relevant parties in order to alleviate suffering of the people in Gaza and welcomed the continued external support provided to Gaza.

On 24 July, the Council discussed the situation in Jerusalem under the item entitled "Other matters", as requested by Egypt, France and Sweden. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process briefed to the Council on the latest developments with regard to the Haram al-Sharif. Members of the Council expressed their grave concerns about the extremely fragile situation, the risk of escalation and the unfolding violence in the Old City of Jerusalem. Political and diplomatic efforts and utmost restraint were called for in order to calm down the situation and avoid further escalation. Some members reiterated that the sanctity of religious sites should be respected.

On 25 July, the Council held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process warned the Council that developments at holy sites in Jerusalem over the previous 11 days had demonstrated the grave risk of a dangerous escalation, including the transformation of the conflict into a religious one, emphasizing the risk of dragging Israel and Palestine and the rest of the region into a vortex of violence. He called for a focus on the need to restore a political perspective, to bring Israelis and Palestinians back into an environment conductive to negotiations on a final status arrangement and to avoid turning the national Israeli-Palestinian conflict into a religious one. Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine made statements.

Nearly 50 representatives of Member States of the United Nations, including 15 Council members, made statements, most of which focused on the recent situation with regard to the question of Palestine. Many States expressed their worries about the crisis in Jerusalem and the risks of further escalation, called for swift, decisive action to defuse and de-escalate the situation, thus ensuring restraint on both sides, and the resumption of negotiations between the parties. Many States expressed serious concern and condemned the continued settlement plan announced by Israel, calling it contrary to international law and a major obstacle to the peace talks, and asked for an immediate and comprehensive halt, while some States mentioned other threats facing the Middle East region, expressing concern over the activities of Hezbollah and its impacts on Israel and the region.

**The situation in the Middle East (Yemen)**

On 12 July, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in the Middle East (Yemen). The Council heard briefings from: the

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed; the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien; the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and the Director-General of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, José Graziano da Silva. The Permanent Representative of Yemen also made a statement to the Council.

After the consultations, the President of the Council read press elements on behalf of the Council members, reiterating their support for a political solution as the only way to end the conflict in Yemen, their call for the parties to immediately agree on the modalities for a durable cessation of hostilities and their continued grave concern about the devastating humanitarian crisis in Yemen, in particular the rapid spread of cholera, as well as the present threat of famine. The members also called on all parties to provide safe, rapid, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access and to respect international humanitarian law and for the immediate mobilization of additional funds to cover acute humanitarian needs, reaffirmed their support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and reiterated their call on all parties to engage in peace talks and resume an inclusive political process.

**Iraq**

On 13 July, the Security Council issued a press statement on the liberation of Mosul. On 14 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2367 (2017), extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 July 2018 and calling upon the Iraqi Government to continue providing security and logistical support to the United Nations presence on the ground. The representative of the United States said that the resolution marked a milestone period in Iraq's fight against ISIL/Da'esh. She encouraged UNAMI to reinvigorate its coordination with the Iraqi authorities in protecting internally displaced persons and discussed how to improve the efficiency of the Mission.

On 17 July, the Council held an open meeting and was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and the Head of UNAMI, Ján Kubiš, who said that the historic liberation of Mosul should not conceal the fact that the road ahead was challenging. He emphasized the need for demining, stabilization and reconstruction to enable the return of internally displaced persons. He reported that UNAMI had prioritized justice for those affected by human rights violations committed in the ongoing armed conflict, and he added that, as the fight to eliminate ISIL/Da'esh was nearing a close, the United Nations was repositioning its response to sexual violence to support the reintegration of survivors into their communities.

The representative of Iraq said that the Government had prioritized "people before land", working to ensure civilian safety in the operations to liberate Mosul. He said that Iraq was a unified federal State that enjoyed sovereignty based on a democratic federal constitution, which reaffirmed the values of citizenry and political representation for all in its ministries and independent agencies. Iraq was considering alternative ways to bring about justice, including through a draft resolution on evidence-collection in crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh, and he pressed the Council to demand that Turkey withdraw its forces from Iraq. He said that Iraq was working to strengthen its relations with regional countries and to locate missing Kuwaiti persons and archives. The representatives of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ukraine and Uruguay also addressed the Council. During the closed consultations following the briefing, members recognized that Iraq's victory over ISIL/Da'esh was a step forward in the fight again terrorism internationally.

During the closed consultations following the briefing, some members emphasized that the crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh must not go unpunished.

Some members encouraged Iraq and its partners to rebuild infrastructure, focus on national reconciliation and facilitate the safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons. Some members underlined the need for the Government, with support from UNAMI and others, to undertake comprehensive security sector reforms. Some members emphasized that an electoral schedule and legal framework would be the fruit of consensus of all parties and stakeholders, and welcomed Iraq's efforts regarding missing Kuwaiti citizens and property.

### Lebanon

On 20 July, the Security Council held close consultations on the report of implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). Council members expressed support to the role of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in stabilizing the situation between Israel and Lebanon and the wider region. Some members reiterated that a strengthened role for UNIFIL will be needed in the future.

## Europe

### Cyprus

On 18 July, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus and Head of Mission, Elizabeth Spehar, and the Special Adviser of Secretary-General on Cyprus, Espen Barth Eide, briefed the Council on the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2017/586) and key developments in the negotiations between the Cypriot leaders. Following closed consultations, the President of the Security Council gave a stakeout for the press. The members of the Council welcomed the progress made in the peace process since February 2014 and, noting the outcome of the recent Conference on Cyprus, praised the efforts of the United Nations good offices in facilitating the Cypriot-led negotiation process.

The members of the Council reaffirmed their continued commitment to supporting the two sides in their efforts to reach a comprehensive and durable settlement to the situation in Cyprus based on relevant Council resolutions, encouraged the two sides and all involved participants to sustain their commitment to a settlement under the auspices of the United Nations, maintain the gains achieved and reflect on the best way to restart the process in order to secure a just and comprehensive settlement.

On 27 July, the members of the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2369 (2017) extending the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to 31 January 2018, and requesting the Secretary-General to conduct a strategic review of the Mission.

## Americas

### Colombia

On 10 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2366 (2017), authorizing the establishment of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to oversee the next phase of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP).

After the vote, Council members hailed the "historic" laying down and return of arms by FARC-EP to the United Nations for registration and storage, emphasized that sustainable peace in Colombia would depend on the successful incorporation of FARC-EP forces into civilian life and called upon the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP to fully implement the Final Agreement. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia said that the benefits of the peace process were already being felt in the countryside and rural areas, where millions of Colombians had suffered the effects of conflict much more than those living in cities, and expressed hope that the Council would continue to support Colombia's peace process.

### Haiti

On 18 July, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Sandra Honoré, on the latest developments in the country. She said that at the time of her briefing, less than three months before MINUSTAH gave way to the new United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), the country remained on the path to stabilization and democratic consolidation. She also emphasized that more needed to be done to consolidate the security and stabilization gains of recent years, to create greater social and political cohesion and to truly reinforce State institutions.

The representative of Haiti said that the country was making progress in building the rule of law and anchoring democracy, but emphasized that the national cholera epidemic was far from being eradicated. He appealed for a prompt and sustained resumption of development assistance that would help lead to sustained growth and eradication of epidemic.

Members of the Council and other delegations welcomed recent developments in Haiti, encouraged the Government to do more to strengthen human rights and the rule of law and called for the international community to extend more support for the United Nations cholera response multi-partner trust fund. They also recalled the visit of Council members to Haiti in June, welcomed the orderly withdrawal of the military component of MINUSTAH, emphasized that the Organization and the international community must support Haiti in shaping its development path and ensuring that its people enjoyed the fruits of the Sustainable Development Goals, and expressed the hope that MINUJUSTH would strengthen the national police and justice institutions.

## Thematic and other issues

### Non-proliferation (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

On 5 July, the Security Council held an open meeting and was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Miroslav Jenča, on the ballistic missile launch conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 4 July. He said that, according to the official news agency, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had launched a ballistic missile near the Panghyon airfield in the north-west of the country. It had covered a distance of 933 kilometres and reached an altitude of 2,802 kilometres before falling into the sea after a 39-minute flight. By those parameters, the projectile would have a range of roughly 6,700 kilometres if launched on a more typical trajectory, making it an intercontinental ballistic missile, according to some definitions.

Members of the Council and the representative of the Republic of Korea addressed the Council after the briefing, urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease any provocative action or violation of Council resolutions immediately. Several Council members called for a strong and swift response to the

missile launch, including the adoption of a new resolution imposing robust sanctions. Some Council members expressed great concern over the increasing escalation and tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and emphasized efforts to seek a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution through dialogue and consultations. China and the Russian Federation introduced their initiative in the China-Russian Federation joint statement on the Korean Peninsula issue. The representative of the United States warned that her Government was prepared to use the full range of its military and other capabilities to defend itself and its allies. The representative of the Republic of Korea urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to realize that its pursuit of nuclear and missile programmes and its continued provocations would worsen its diplomatic isolation and deepen its economic plight.

**Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts**

On 20 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2368 (2017), reinforcing its resolve to adapt to evolving terrorist threats, such as using the Internet to spread, incite and organize terrorist activities, terrorist financing and the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters. The resolution aimed to encourage Governments to update their methods and coordinate an effective approach to enhancing cooperation against terrorism, cutting off funds to terrorist groups, preventing their travel, banning them from acquiring arms and ensuring that sanctions were fully implemented. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the resolution detailed the types of sanctions already imposed on ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and groups.

By the terms of resolution 2368 (2017), the Council directed the Committee to keep "under active review" its guidelines for placing, removing or granting exemptions to individuals and entities on its Sanctions List. It extended the mandates of the Office of the Ombudsperson, established by its resolution 1904 (2009), and the New York-based Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, established by its resolution 1526 (2004), for 24 months beyond their December 2019 expiration. The mandates for the Monitoring Team and the Office of the Ombudsperson were outlined in annexes I and II of the resolution, while annex III contained eight additions to the Sanctions List.

On 7 July, the Council issued a press statement on the terrorist attack in Rafah, Egypt. The Council condemned in the strongest terms the heinous and cowardly terrorist attack that took place on 7 July against a checkpoint in Rafah, Egypt, where at least 26 officers and soldiers of the Egyptian armed forces were killed and injured. They reaffirmed the need for all States to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter and other obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

On 24 July, the Council issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attack in Lahore, Pakistan. The Council underlined the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financers and sponsors of the reprehensible act of terrorism to justice, and urged all States to combat threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist in accordance with the Charter and other obligations under international law.

The Council condemned the terrorist attacks in Kabul in two press statements issued on 24 and 31 July. In those statements the Council noted the ongoing efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to fully investigate these terrorist attacks and urged all States to cooperate actively with the relevant Governments and authorities in accordance with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions.

United Nations S/2017/957

Security Council

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*The Security Council*,

*Recalling* its previous resolutions and statements on the Central African Republic (CAR), in particular resolutions 2121 (2013), 2127 (2013), 2134 (2014), 2149 (2014), 2181 (2014), 2196 (2015), 2212 (2015), 2217 (2015), 2262 (2016), 2264 (2016), 2281 (2016), 2301 (2016), 2339 (2017), as well as resolution 2272 (2016), and its Presidential Statements S/PRST/2014/28 of 18 December 2014, S/PRST/2015/17 of 20 October 2015, S/PRST/2016/17 of 16 November 2016, S/PRST/2017/5 of 4 April 2017 and S/PRST/2017/9 of 13 July 2017,

*Reaffirming* its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the CAR, and *recalling* the importance of the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation,

*Reaffirming* the basic principles of peacekeeping, including consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force, except in self-defence and defence of the mandate, *recognizing* that the mandate of each peacekeeping mission is specific to the need and situation of the country concerned, and *recalling*, in this regard, its Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/22 of 25 November 2015,

*Recalling* that the CAR Authorities have the primary responsibility to protect all populations in the CAR in particular from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and, in this regard, recalling the importance of restoring state authority in all parts of the country,

*Emphasizing* that any sustainable solution to the crisis in the CAR should be CAR-owned, including the political process, and should prioritize reconciliation of the Central African people, through an inclusive process that involves men and women of all social, economic, political, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including, those displaced by the crisis,

*Expressing* concern at the deterioration of the security situation, in particular in the south-eastern part and the north-western parts of the CAR, due to the ongoing clashes between armed groups in their attempts to forcefully gain control of territory and resources and destabilize the country, as well as the lack of capacity of the national security forces, and the persistence of the root causes of the conflict,

*Condemning* in the strongest terms incitement to ethnic and religious hatred and violence and the multiple violations of international humanitarian law and the widespread human rights violations and abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence, committed notably by both ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka elements, as well as other militia groups, as well as the targeting of civilians from specific communities,



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*Recalling* the submission of the report (S/2014/928) of the International Commission of Inquiry established by resolution 2127 (2013), *noting with concern* its finding that the main parties to the conflict, including ex-Seleka, the anti-Balaka, and elements from the CAR Armed Forces (FACA) who collaborated with armed groups committed violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses since 1 January 2013, that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, including ethnic cleansing by elements of the anti-Balaka militia,

*Condemning* in the strongest terms all attacks, provocations and incitement to violence against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) contingents and other international forces by armed groups or other perpetrators, *paying tribute to* the personnel of MINUSCA who sacrificed their lives in the service of peace, underlining that attacks targeting peacekeepers may constitute war crimes, reminding all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law and urging the CAR Authorities to take all possible measures to ensure the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators,

*Welcoming* in this regard MINUSCA's efforts to protect civilians and to combat armed groups with the success of operation "BEKPA" in Bambari in February and March 2017, operation "MARAZE" in Bangassou in August 2017, and operation "DAMAKONGO" in Bocaranga in October 2017,

*Stressing* the urgent and imperative need to end impunity in the CAR and to bring to justice perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian law and of abuses and violations of human rights, *welcoming in this regard* the progressive operationalization of the Special Criminal Court (SCC) and underlining the need to bolster the other national accountability mechanisms as well as the support for the work of the Independent Expert on human rights in the CAR,

*Reiterating* the primary responsibility of the national authorities to ensure a conducive environment for the effective and independent investigation, prosecution and adjudication of all cases, also emphasizing the need for the CAR government to ensure institutional preparedness to that end,

*Welcoming* steps initiated by the Government of the CAR in establishing transitional justice mechanisms to ensure accountability for past crimes and reparation for victims while promoting national reconciliation,

*Welcoming* the commitment of the Secretary-General to enforce strictly his zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), *noting* the various measures taken by MINUSCA and Troop- and Police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) to combat SEA, which has led to a reduction in reported cases, but still *expressing* grave concern over numerous allegations of SEA reportedly committed by peacekeepers in the CAR, as well as by non-United Nations forces, stressing the urgent need for T/PCCs and, as appropriate, MINUSCA, to promptly investigate those allegations in a credible and transparent manner and for those responsible for such criminal offences or misconduct to be held to account, and further stressing the need to prevent such exploitation and abuse and to improve how these allegations are addressed in line with resolution 2272 (2016),

*Emphasizing* the fact that the current security situation in the CAR provides a conducive environment for transnational criminal activity, such as that involving arms trafficking and the use of mercenaries as well as a potential breeding ground for radical networks,

*Expressing grave concern* at the threat to peace and security in the CAR arising from the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and the use of such weapons against civilians,

*Acknowledging* in this respect the important contribution to the peace, stability or security of the CAR, of the Council-mandated sanctions regime renewed by resolution 2339 (2017), including its provisions related to the arms embargo, and its provisions related to individuals or entities designated by the Committee as engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR,

*Reiterating* that illicit trade, exploitation and smuggling of natural resources including gold, diamonds, and wildlife poaching and trafficking continues to threaten the peace and stability of the CAR,

*Expressing concern* about reported travel by individuals designated pursuant to UNSC resolution 2127 (2013) and noting the critical importance of effective implementation of the sanctions regime, including the key role that neighbouring States, as well as regional and subregional organizations, can play in this regard and encouraging efforts to further enhance cooperation,

*Reiterating* its serious concern at the dire humanitarian situation in the CAR, the consequences of the deterioration of the security situation on humanitarian access, as well as the violence against humanitarian workers, and emphasizing in particular the current humanitarian needs of the more than 600,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 500,000 refugees in neighbouring countries and further expressing concern at the consequences of the flow of refugees on the situation in Chad, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as other countries of the region,

*Recalling* the responsibility of the CAR Authorities to protect and promote the right to freedom of movement of all people in the CAR, including IDPs, without distinction, their freedom to choose where to reside, and to comply with their right to return to their own country or to leave in order to seek asylum in other States and *expressing concern* for the plight of civilians trapped in enclaves with limited access to humanitarian assistance,

*Recalling* the holding of, and local participation in, grassroots consultations throughout the country between 21 January and 8 March 2015, which enabled thousands of people in the CAR to express their views on the future of their country, and the holding of the Bangui Forum in May 2015, during which the Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction as well as agreements on the principles for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDR/R), justice and reconciliation, and security sector reform (SSR), and on the commitment by armed groups to end the recruitment and use of children and to release all children from their ranks, were adopted,

*Recalling* the peaceful organization of a constitutional referendum on 13 December 2015 and legislative and presidential elections in December 2015, February and March 2016, as well as the inauguration of the President Faustin-Archange Touadéra on 30 March 2016,

*Recalling* the need for an inclusive, gender-sensitive and effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process (DDR) as well as repatriation (DDRR) in the case of foreign fighters, including children formerly associated with armed forces and groups, while respecting the need to fight against impunity,

*Recalling* the successful conduct of pre-DDR activities and Community Violence Reduction programmes (CVR) which have contributed to reduce the presence of members of armed groups,

*Underlining* the continued need to support national, and to coordinate international, efforts towards the transformation of the security sector in the CAR and stressing the crucial role of the internal security forces (police and gendarmerie) in the restoration of community security, public safety and the rule of law in the CAR,

*Welcoming* in this regard the work done by the EU training mission (EUTM) to provide support to reform the FACA into multi-ethnic, professional, and representative armed forces, as indicated in the letter of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security policy dated 30 May 2016,

*Recalling* its resolutions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including 2286 (2016) and 1894 (2009); its resolutions on Children and Armed Conflict including 2225 (2015) and its resolutions on Women, Peace and Security including 2106 (2013) and 2242 (2015), and *calling upon* all parties in the CAR to engage with the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict,

*Expressing* its concern that children have continued to be victims of abuses committed by armed elements of the ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka as well as other armed groups including the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and that women and girls continue to be violently targeted and victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the CAR,

*Welcoming* the ratification by CAR Authorities of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict on 21 September 2017 and *underlining* the importance of its full implementation,

*Emphasizing* that the continued role and contribution of neighbouring countries, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), as well as the African Union (AU), remains critical for the promotion of lasting peace and stability in the CAR, *reiterating* appreciation for their ongoing efforts in this regard,

*Welcoming* the strong engagement of the European Union (EU) and the positive engagement of the Community of Sant'Egidio through the agreement signed in Rome on 19 June 2017 that constituted a step towards peace and stability in the CAR, as well as the engagement of other International Organizations such as the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and *further welcoming* the bilateral contributions of Member States to the stabilization of the CAR,

*Calling on* international partners to assist the CAR Authorities in building the institutional and operational capacities of national police, gendarmerie and customs authorities to effectively monitor the borders and points of entry, including to support the implementation of the measures renewed and modified by paragraph 1 of resolution 2339 (2017) and the disarmament and repatriation of foreign armed elements,

*Stressing* the need to implement MINUSCA's mandate, based on the prioritization of tasks, and, when relevant, in a phased manner,

*Welcoming* the Report of the Secretary-General of 16 October 2017 (S/2017/865),

*Determining* that the situation in the CAR continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

*Acting* under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

**Political process**

1. *Renews* its support to President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, and to his government and *welcomes* his efforts to advance the dialogue with armed groups and extend state authority in all parts of the country, as well as his commitments at the High-Level Event on the CAR in the margin of the General Assembly in September 2017;

2. *Welcomes* the steps that were taken in this regard, such as the adoption and implementation of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA), the adoption of a National Strategy for the Restoration of State Authority, the adoption of a National Security Policy and National Strategy for SSR, the validation of a Reform Plan for the Internal Security Forces, the launch of the DDR/R pilot project, as well as the recent efforts that were made to ensure a greater representation of all components of the society within the Government of the CAR, and *encourages* CAR Authorities to continue their efforts to build more inclusive governance mechanisms in order to foster a conducive environment to national consensus and political progress;

3. *Welcomes* the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR that led to the adoption of the roadmap by the ministerial conference held in Libreville on 17 July 2017 by the CAR authorities, the African Union, the ECCAS, the ICGLR with the support of Angola, Chad, Congo and Gabon, and *reaffirms* that this Initiative and this roadmap constitute the main framework for a political solution in the CAR, as agreed by CAR Authorities and under their leadership;

4. *Reiterates* the need to coordinate all efforts in support of peace and reconciliation in the CAR, *encourages* the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation to work closely with the United Nations, and *welcomes* in this regard the decision of the Panel of Facilitators to ensure consistency in a strategic and operational partnership with MINUSCA as well as the assistance provided by the mission to the Panel, and *further calls on* international partners to provide political and financial support the work of the Panel of Facilitators;

5. *Urges* the CAR authorities and the armed groups to engage constructively and in good faith in an inclusive peace process to reach a comprehensive political agreement as reiterated by the ECCAS Foreign ministers extraordinary meeting on 21 October 2017;

6. *Demands* that all militias and armed groups lay down their arms, cease all forms of violence and destabilizing activities, including attacks against peacekeepers and humanitarian workers as well as incitement to hatred and violence, and release children from their ranks, immediately and unconditionally, and *urges* all political and institutional actors in the CAR to strongly condemn and hinder such acts;

7. *Further demands* that all militias and armed groups end attacks against peacekeepers and humanitarian workers;

8. *Urges* the CAR authorities to urgently implement a genuine and inclusive reconciliation in the CAR, including by addressing marginalization and local grievances of all the components of society over the whole territory of the CAR, including through national policies on economic development and civil service

recruitment, and to promote reconciliation initiatives at the regional, national, prefectural and local levels, including through local elections;

9. *Also calls upon* the CAR authorities to ensure that national policies and legislative frameworks adequately protect the human rights of IDPs, including freedom of movement, and supports durable solutions for IDPs and refugee populations, including the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return to one's home or local integration or resettlement;

10. *Recalls* the crucial role of civil society in the peace and reconciliation process to ensure that the comprehensive political agreement addresses the root causes of the conflict and *further encourages* the full and effective participation of women in this process;

11. *Underscores* the importance of respect for the Constitution to ensure the long-term stabilization and development of the CAR;

12. *Encourages* the submission by Member States of listing requests to the Committee established by paragraph 57 of resolution 2127 (2013), including detailed evidentiary support for each request, of individuals and entities engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR, including acts that threaten or impede the political process, or the stabilization and reconciliation process, or that fuel violence;

13. *Urges* the CAR Authorities to address the presence and activity of armed groups in the CAR by implementing a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes dialogue and the urgent implementation of an inclusive DDR/R programme, to be implemented in coherence with SSR which ensures civilian oversight of defence and national security forces, with the support of the international community;

14. *Calls on* the CAR Authorities to implement the National Security Policy and the National Strategy on SSR, in order to put in place professional, ethnically representative and regionally balanced national defence and internal security forces, including through the adoption and implementation of appropriate vetting procedures of all defence and security personnel, including human rights vetting, as well as measures to absorb elements of armed groups meeting rigorous eligibility and vetting criteria, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council on progress taken in this regard as part of his regular reporting cycle;

15. *Welcomes* the finalization, in coordination with MINUSCA and EUTM-RCA, of the 2017–2019 Guidance Document for the Redeployment of CAR armed forces, as requested by resolution 2301 (2016), which establishes the conditions for the progressive redeployment of the FACA units trained by EUTM RCA, in coordination with MINUSCA, EUTM-RCA and other relevant international partners, in order to contribute to the extension of State authority and security and *further calls on* CAR Authorities to design and finalize, within a reasonable time, other procedures necessary to the full reoperationalization of FACA;

16. *Calls on* the CAR Authorities to take concrete steps, without delay and as a matter of priority, to strengthen justice institutions and to fight impunity, in order to contribute to stabilization and reconciliation, including, inter alia, by restoring administration of the judiciary, criminal justice and penitentiary systems throughout the country, by demilitarizing the prisons and gradually replace the FACA by recruiting civilian prison personnel and by ensuring access to fair and equal justice for all;

17. *Welcomes* in this regard the progressive operationalization of the SCC and the nomination of the Steering Committee for the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

18. *Also calls on* the CAR Authorities to continue their efforts to restore the effective authority of the State over the whole territory of the CAR, including by redeploying State administration in the provinces, and ensuring the timely payment of salaries to civil servants and Security forces, with the objective of ensuring stable, accountable, inclusive and transparent governance;

19. *Encourages* the CAR Authorities, with the support of the international community, in particular with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) leading international efforts, and based on critical peace and State building goals, to continue consolidating public financial management and accountability, including revenue collection, expenditure controls, public procurement and concession practices building on relevant international experiences and in a manner that allows it to meet the expenses related to the functioning of the State, implement early recovery plans, and revitalize the economy, and fosters national ownership and respects the sovereignty of the CAR;

20. *Further calls on* Member States, international and regional organizations to disburse pledges made at the international conference in Brussels (17 November 2016) as well as the African Solidarity Conference held in Addis Ababa (1 February 2017), in support of the implementation of the country's peacebuilding priorities as outlined in the CAR's National Strategy for Recovery and Peace consolidation to provide support to the CAR Authorities for the reforms, for the restoration of the State authority over the whole territory, including contributions for the payment of salaries and other needs, in addition to support for the SSR and DDR R programmes and for the restoration of the judiciary and the criminal justice system including the SCC and, in that regard, *encourages* the CAR Authorities to accelerate the effective implementation of the RCPCA;

21. *Welcomes* the continued engagement of the United Nations, including the Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the African Union (AU), the ECCAS, the ICGLR, neighbouring States, the European Union, the International Contact Group (ICG), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and other international partners and donors in support of the stabilization of the CAR;

22. *Takes note* of the development of a framework of mutual accountability between the CAR Authorities and international partners under the leadership of the Government of the CAR, with the aim of enhancing transparency and accountability as well as the coherence and sustained support of the CAR's international partners in support of agreed national priorities;

23. *Stresses* in this context the valuable role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in bringing strategic advice and fostering a more coherent, coordinated and integrated approach to international peacebuilding efforts, recognizes the active role of the Kingdom of Morocco, and encourages continued coordination with the PBC and other relevant international organizations and institutions in support of CAR's long term peace building needs;

**Human rights, including child protection and sexual violence in conflict**

24. *Reiterates* the urgent and imperative need to hold accountable all perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, irrespective of their status or political affiliation, and reiterates that some of those acts may amount to crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), to which the CAR is a State party;

25. *Recalls* the decision made by the Prosecutor of the ICC on 24 September 2014 to open, following the request of the national Authorities, an investigation into

alleged crimes committed since 2012, and welcomes the ongoing cooperation of the CAR Authorities in this regard;

26. *Takes note* in this regard of the report of the Mapping Project describing serious violations and abuses of international human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed within the territory of CAR between January 2003 and December 2015 and *further calls on* the CAR Authorities to follow-up on the recommendations;

27. *Urges* all parties to armed conflict in the CAR, including ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka elements, to end all violations and abuses committed against children, in violation of applicable international law, including those involving their recruitment and use, rape and sexual violence, killing and maiming, abductions and attacks on schools and hospitals and further calls upon the CAR Authorities to swiftly investigate alleged violations and abuses in order to hold perpetrators accountable and to ensure that those responsible for such violations and abuses are excluded from the security sector;

28. *Reiterates* its demands that all parties protect and consider as victims those children who have been released or otherwise separated from armed forces and armed groups, and emphasizes the need to pay particular attention to the protection, release and reintegration of all children associated with armed forces and armed groups;

29. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict in the CAR, including ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka elements, to end sexual and gender-based violence, and further calls upon the CAR Authorities to swiftly investigate alleged abuses in order to hold perpetrators accountable, and to develop a structured and comprehensive framework to address sexual violence in conflict, in line with resolutions 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013), to ensure that those responsible for such crimes are excluded from the security sector and prosecuted, and to facilitate immediate access for victims of sexual violence to available services;

**Peacekeeping Operation**

30. *Renews* its strong support to Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Parfait Onanga-Anyanga;

31. *Decides* to extend the mandate of MINUSCA until 15 November 2018;

32. *Decides* to authorise an increase of 900 military personnel in addition to the military personnel authorized by paragraph 24 of resolution 2301 (2016) in order to increase MINUSCA's flexibility and mobility to improve the efficient implementation of its full mandate and, in particular, the protection of civilians task provided at paragraph 42 (a), thereby resulting in an authorized troop ceiling of 11,650 military personnel, including 480 Military Observers and Military Staff Officers, 2,080 police personnel, including 400 Individual Police Officers, as well as 108 corrections officers, and recalls its intention to keep this number under continuous review;

33. *Reiterates* the importance of current and future T/PCCs providing troops and police with adequate capabilities, equipment and predeployment training in order to enhance the capacity of MINUSCA to operate effectively and requests the Secretary-General to accelerate the recruitment of qualified staff, who have the competencies, education, work experience and language skills to adequately and effectively implement the tasks enumerated in paragraphs 42 to 44 below;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all possible steps, including through the full use of existing authorities and at his discretion, to maximize

MINUSCA's operational capacity and ability to discharge its mandate, with a specific focus on priority areas, over the entire territory of the CAR, including by using new rapidly deployable units and through enhancing MINUSCA's personnel, mobility assets and capabilities for gathering timely, reliable and actionable information on threats to civilians and the analytical tools to use it, while continuing to strengthen the performance of the Mission;

35. *Commends* the commitment of the T/PCCs in implementing the mission's mandate in a challenging environment, and in this connection, highlights that undeclared national caveats, lack of effective command and control, refusal to obey orders, failure to respond to attacks on civilians, and inadequate equipment may adversely affect the shared responsibility for effective mandate implementation;

36. *Notes* the progress of all T/PCCs to meet UN standards and calls on them to immediately finalize the procurement and deployment of all required contingent-owned equipment, in order to comply with United Nations standards for troops and police;

37. *Calls on* the Secretariat to continue to explore, on the basis of need, the use of specialized police teams together with required specialized equipment, for police and gendarmerie capacity building and development and operational support;

38. *Urges* MINUSCA and all relevant United Nations bodies, to ensure unhindered access and safety for the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), in particular to persons, documents and sites within their control in order for the Panel to execute its mandate;

39. *Recalls* that MINUSCA's strategic objective is to support the creation of conditions conducive to the sustainable reduction of the presence of, and threat posed by, armed groups through a comprehensive approach and proactive and robust posture without prejudice to the basic principles of peacekeeping;

40. *Recalls* that MINUSCA's mandate should be implemented based on a prioritization of tasks established in paragraphs 42 to 44 of this resolution, and, when relevant, in a phased manner, and further requests the Secretary-General to reflect this prioritization in the deployment of the mission and to align budgetary resources according to the prioritization of mandate tasks as set out in this resolution, while ensuring appropriate resources for the implementation of the mandate;

41. *Authorises* MINUSCA to take all necessary means to carry out its mandate within its capabilities and areas of deployment;

42. *Decides* that the mandate of MINUSCA shall include the following priority tasks:

**(a) Protection of civilians**

(i) To protect, without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the CAR Authorities and the basic principles of peacekeeping in line with S/PRST/2015/22, the civilian population under threat of physical violence;

(ii) In support of CAR Authorities, to take active steps to anticipate, deter and effectively respond to serious and credible threats to the civilian population and, in this regard, to enhance early warning, while maintaining a proactive deployment and a mobile, flexible and robust posture, as well as conducting active patrolling, in particular in high risks areas;

(iii) To provide specific protection for women and children affected by armed conflict, including through the deployment of Child Protection Advisers, Women Protection Advisers and Gender Advisers;

(iv) To identify and report threats to and attacks against civilians and implement prevention and response plans and strengthen civil-military cooperation;

(v) To fully implement and deliver, in close consultation with humanitarian and human rights organizations and other relevant partners, the mission-wide protection of civilians strategy;

**(b) Good offices and support to the peace process, including national reconciliation, social cohesion and transitional justice**

(i) To enhance support for inclusive political dialogue, under the leadership of the Government of the CAR, and in partnership with the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR;

(ii) To assist the CAR authorities' efforts, at national and local levels, for an increased participation of political parties, civil society, and women to the peace process, in cooperation with the African Initiative and other mediation actors;

(iii) To provide good offices and technical expertise in support of efforts to address the root causes of conflict, in particular a greater focus on national reconciliation and local conflict resolution, working with relevant regional and local bodies and religious leaders, while ensuring the full and effective participation of women in line with the CAR action plan on Women, Peace and Security, and drawing upon integrated information and analysis from the United Nations system in-country;

(iv) To support efforts of the CAR Authorities to address transitional justice as part of the peace and reconciliation process, and marginalization and local grievances, including through dialogue with the armed groups, civil society leaders including women and youth representatives, and by assisting national, prefectoral and local authorities to foster confidence among communities;

(v) To provide technical expertise to the Government of the CAR in its engagement with neighbouring countries, the ECCAS, and the AU, in consultation and coordination with UNOCA;

(vi) To continue to assist the political efforts of the AU, ECCAS, including the work of the Panel of Facilitators, to support the political process;

**(c) To ensure the creation of a secure environment for the immediate, full, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance**

To engage in coordination with humanitarian actors, in order to facilitate the creation of a secure environment for the immediate, full, safe and unhindered, civilian-led delivery of humanitarian assistance, in accordance with United Nations guiding humanitarian principles and relevant provisions of international law, and for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return or local integration or resettlement of internally displaced persons or refugees in close coordination with humanitarian actors;

**(d) Protection of the United Nations**

To protect the United Nations personnel, installations, equipment and goods and ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel;

43. *Further authorizes* MINUSCA to pursue the following tasks of its mandate, bearing in mind that these tasks as well as those in paragraph 42 above are mutually reinforcing:

**(a) Support for the extension of State authority, the deployment of security forces, and the preservation of territorial integrity**

(i) To continue to support the Government in implementing its strategy for the extension of State authority including by providing advice to the Government of the CAR on the establishment of interim security and administrative arrangements acceptable to the population and under Government of the CAR oversight, and through sequenced efforts based on identified priorities and targeted geographic areas, to articulate a division of labour with the United Nations Country Team and relevant partners in which MINUSCA would focus on immediate, short and medium-term priorities and hand over activities in long-term areas to relevant partners and to report to the Security council on benchmarks for tasks to be handed over to the United Nations Country Team and partners;

(ii) To support a gradual handover of security of key officials, and static guard duties of national institutions, to the CAR security forces, in coordination with the CAR Authorities, and based on the risks on the ground;

(iii) To promote and support the rapid extension of State authority over the entire territory of the CAR, including by supporting the deployment of vetted and trained national police and gendarmerie in priority areas, including through co-location, advising, mentoring and monitoring, in coordination with other partners, as part of the deployment of the territorial administration and other rule of law authorities, for increasing State presence in these priority areas outside of Bangui;

(iv) On the basis of the 2017-2019 Guidance Document for the Redeployment of CAR armed forces, requested by resolution 2301 (2016), to consider providing support to the progressive and coordinated redeployment of FACA units trained by EUTM-RCA, as an element of the strategy for the extension of State authority, in accordance with the United Nations HRDDP and with the guarantee that is does not constitutes a risk to the stabilization of the country, civilians or the political process, and requesting the Secretary-General to present recommendations, with detailed benchmarks and timelines, to the Security Council for its consideration and possible approval within 6 months of the adoption of this resolution, while keeping in mind that technical agreements between the United Nations and donors could be considered to support the CAR defence forces;

**(b) Security Sector Reform (SSR)**

(i) To provide strategic and technical advice to the CAR Authorities to implement the National Strategy on SSR, in close coordination with EUTM-RCA, and with the aim of ensuring coherence of the SSR process, including through a clear delineation of responsibilities of the FACA, the internal security forces, and other uniformed entities, as well as the democratic control of both defence and internal security forces;

(iii) To support the CAR Authorities in developing an approach to the vetting of defence and security elements (FACA, police and gendarmerie) which includes human rights vetting, in particular to promote accountability of violations of international and domestic law amongst security forces and in the context of any integration of demobilized armed groups elements into security sector institutions;

(iii) To take a leading role in supporting the CAR Authorities in implementing the National Capacity-Building and Development Plan for Internal Security Forces, particularly command and control structures and oversight mechanisms, and coordinate international assistance in this regard;

(iv) To support the Government of the CAR in developing an incentive structure for training of police and gendarmerie and for the selection, recruitment, vetting and training of police and gendarmerie elements, with the support of donors and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), taking into account the need to recruit women, and in full compliance with the United Nations HRDDP;

(v) To coordinate the provision of technical assistance and training between the international partners in the CAR, in particular with EUTM-RCA, in order to ensure a clear distribution of tasks in the field of SSR, for the benefit of both the FACA and the CAR internal security forces (police and gendarmerie);

**(c) Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Repatriation (DDRR)**

(i) To support the CAR Authorities in developing and implementing an inclusive and progressive programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and, in case of foreign elements, Repatriation (DDRR), of members of armed groups, based on the Principles of DDRR and Integration into the Uniformed Corps, signed at the Bangui Forum on 10 May 2015, while paying specific attention to the needs of children associated with armed forces and groups and the need to prevent rerecruitment, including through the implementation of the DDRR pilot project and the implementation of other DDRR projects, including gender-sensitive programmes, with the aim to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate as well as, in coordination with EUTM, the United Nations Country Teams and other relevant partners, to integrate eligible and vetted armed groups elements in security forces, as an incentive to armed groups to remain engaged in the political process and in preparation for the national DDR programme;

(ii) To support the CAR Authorities and relevant civil society organizations in developing and implementing CVR programmes, including gender-sensitive programmes, for members of armed groups non-eligible for participation in the national DDRR programme, in cooperation with development partners and together with communities of return in line with the priorities highlighted in the RCPCA;

(iii) To provide technical assistance to the CAR Authorities in developing and implementing a national plan for the integration of eligible demobilized members of armed groups into the security and defence forces, in line with the broader SSR agenda and the need to put in place professional, ethnically representative and regionally balanced national security and defence;

**(d) Promotion and protection of human rights**

(i) To monitor, help investigate, and report publicly and to the Security Council on violations of international humanitarian law and on violations and abuses of human rights committed throughout the CAR;

(ii) To monitor, help investigate and ensure reporting on violations and abuses committed against children and women, including rape and other forms of sexual violence in armed conflict, in connection with the Joint Rapid Response Unit within the gendarmerie and the police established to respond to sexual violence (UMIRR);

(iii) To assist the CAR Authorities in their efforts to protect and promote human rights and prevent violations and abuses and to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations;

**(e) Support for national and international justice, the fight against impunity, and the rule of law**

(i) To help reinforce the independence of the judiciary, build the capacities, and enhance the effectiveness of the national judicial system as well as the effectiveness and the accountability of the penitentiary system;

(ii) To help build the capacities of the national human rights institution coordinating with the Independent Expert on human rights as appropriate;

Urgent temporary measures:

(iii) To urgently and actively adopt, within the limits of its capacities and areas of deployment, at the formal request of the CAR Authorities and in areas where national security forces are not present or operational, urgent temporary measures on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent and without prejudice to the agreed principles of peacekeeping operations, which are limited in scope, time-bound and consistent with the objectives set out in paragraphs 42 and 43 (e), to arrest and detain in order to maintain basic law and order and fight impunity;

(iv) To pay particular attention, in implementing the urgent temporary measures in the conditions stated above, to those engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR, including acts that threaten or impede the political process, or the stabilization and reconciliation process, or that fuel violence;

Special Criminal Court (SCC):

(v) To provide technical assistance to the CAR Authorities to identify, investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes involving violations of international humanitarian law and of violations and abuses of human rights committed throughout the CAR so that they can be brought to justice, and to help prevent such violations and abuses;

(vi) To provide support and to coordinate international assistance to the justice and correctional institutions to reinstate the criminal justice system, within the framework of the United Nations global focal point on rule of law, in a manner that emphasizes civilian oversight, impartiality and the protection of human rights;

(vii) To provide technical assistance to the CAR Authorities in partnership with other international partners, to support the operationalization of the SCC consistent with CAR laws and jurisdiction and in line with the CAR's

international humanitarian law and international human rights law obligations, with the aim of supporting the extension of State authority;

(viii) To provide technical assistance, in partnership with other international partners, and capacity building for the CAR Authorities, in order to facilitate the functioning of the SCC, in particular in the areas of investigations, arrests, detention, criminal and forensic analysis, evidence collection and storage, recruitment and selection of personnel, court management, prosecution strategy and case development and the establishment of a legal aid system, as appropriate, as well as, to provide security for magistrates, including at the premises and proceedings of the SCC, and take measures for the protection of victims and witnesses, in line with the CAR's international human rights obligations, including with respect to fair trials, and due process;

(ix) To assist in the coordination and mobilization of bilateral and multilateral support to the operationalization and functioning of the SCC;

Rule of law:

(x) To provide support and to coordinate international assistance to build the capacities, and enhance the effectiveness of the criminal justice system as well as the effectiveness and the accountability of police and penitentiary system;

(xi) Without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the CAR Authorities, to support the restoration and maintenance of public safety and the rule of law, including through apprehending and handing over to the CAR Authorities, consistent with international law, those in the country responsible for crimes involving serious human rights violations and abuses and serious violations of international humanitarian law, including sexual violence in conflict, so that they can be brought to justice, and through cooperation with States of the region as well as the ICC in cases of crimes falling within its jurisdiction;

**(f) Illicit exploitation and trafficking of natural resources**

To continue to support the CAR Authorities to develop and finalize a nationally owned strategy to tackle the illicit exploitation and trafficking networks of natural resources which continue to fund and supply armed groups in the CAR taking into account, where appropriate, the reports of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) and the decisions of the Kimberley Process (KP), with the aim of extending the State authority over the entire territory and its resources;

44. *Further authorises* MINUSCA to carry out the following additional tasks:

(a) To coordinate international assistance as appropriate;

(b) To assist the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 57 of resolution 2127 (2013) and the Panel of Experts established by the same resolution, including by passing information relevant to the implementation of the mandate of the Committee and Panel of Experts;

(c) To monitor the implementation of the measures renewed and modified by paragraph 1 of resolution 2339 (2017), in cooperation with the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), including by inspecting, as it deems necessary and when appropriate without notice, all arms and related materiel regardless of location, and advise the Authorities on efforts to keep armed groups from exploiting natural resources;

(d) To seize and collect arms and any related materiel the transfer of which to the CAR violates the measures imposed by paragraph 1 of resolution 2339 (2017) and to record and dispose of such arms and related materiel as appropriate;

(e) To provide transport for relevant State authorities in carrying out inspections and monitoring visits in key mining areas and sites as appropriate and on a case by case basis and when the situation allows, as a means to promote and support the rapid extension of the State authority over the entire territory;

45. *Requests* the Secretary-General to deploy and allocate personnel and expertise within MINUSCA to reflect the priorities identified by paragraph 42 to paragraph 44 of this resolution, and to continuously adjust this deployment according to the progresses made in the implementation of this mandate;

46. *Encourages* MINUSCA to develop measurable targets by which to assess progress against the pursuit of the strategic objective defined in paragraph 39 of this resolution;

47. *Requests* MINUSCA to continue using relevant and tailored communication tools, in particular radio, to help the local population better understand the mandate of the mission, its activities, and to build trust with the CAR citizens, parties to the conflict, regional and other international actors and partners on the ground as part of an effective political strategy;

48. *Requests* MINUSCA to consider the environmental impacts of its operations when fulfilling its mandated tasks and, in this context, to manage them as appropriate and in accordance with applicable and relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations rules and regulations;

49. *Calls on* the CAR, its neighbouring States and other member States of the ICGLR to cooperate at the regional level to investigate and combat regional criminal networks and armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation and smuggling of natural resources including gold, diamonds and wildlife poaching and trafficking;

50. *Requests* MINUSCA to take fully into account child protection as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to assist the CAR Authorities in ensuring that the protection of children's rights is taken into account, inter alia, in DDR and DDR/R processes and in SSR in order to end and prevent violations and abuses against children;

51. *Requests* MINUSCA to take fully into account gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to assist the CAR Authorities in ensuring the full and effective participation, involvement and representation of women in all spheres and at all levels, including in stabilization activities, transitional justice, the work of the SCC and of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, SSR, DDR and DDR/R processes, as well as in the national political dialogue and electoral processes, through, inter alia, the provision of gender advisers, *further requests* enhanced reporting by MINUSCA to the Council on this issue, and *encourages* the UN Secretariat, in collaboration with Member States, to engage greater numbers of women in the military, police and civilian components of the mission with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with article 101, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter;

52. *Recalls* its Presidential Statement S/PRST/2015/22 and its resolution 2272 (2016) and requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure full compliance of MINUSCA with the United Nations zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure that all personnel of the mission are vetted for history of sexual misconduct in the service with the United Nations and to

keep the Council informed through his reports to the Council about the Mission's progress in this regard, including by reporting on the start, agreed deadlines and outcomes of 2272 reviews, and urges TCC/PCCs to take appropriate preventative action including predeployment awareness training, and to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

53. *Requests* MINUSCA to ensure that any support provided to non-United Nations security forces is provided in strict compliance with the HRDDP, and requests the Secretary-General to include information on any such support in his reports to the Council;

54. *Emphasizes* the need for MINUSCA and EUTM-RCA, while carrying out their mandate, to act in full respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the CAR and in full compliance with applicable international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law and recalls the importance of training in this regard;

**Weapon and ammunition management**

55. *Requests* MINUSCA to actively seize, confiscate and destroy, as appropriate, the weapons and ammunitions of armed elements, including all militias and other non-state armed groups, who refuse or fail to lay down their arms, and when they present an imminent threat to civilians or the stability of the state;

56. *Requests* MINUSCA to provide technical assistance to the CAR Authorities in the operationalization of the national commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons to address civilian disarmament and the fight against the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons;

57. *Requests* MINUSCA to destroy, as appropriate, the weapons and ammunitions of disarmed combatants in keeping with its effort to seize and collect arms and related materiel the supply, sale or transfer of which violate the measures imposed by paragraph 1 of resolution 2339 (2017);

58. *Calls upon* the CAR Authorities and international partners and relevant United Nations entities, in coordination with MINUSCA and United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), to address the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation, and misuse of small arms and light weapons in the CAR, and to ensure the safe and effective management, storage and security of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons, and the collection and/or destruction of surplus, seized, unmarked, or illicitly held weapons and ammunition, and further stresses the importance of incorporating such elements into SSR and DDR/R programmes;

59. *Encourages* the CAR Authorities to implement the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition, Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly signed at Kinshasa on April, 30 2010;

**MINUSCA Freedom of movement**

60. *Urges* all parties in the CAR to cooperate fully with the deployment and activities of MINUSCA, in particular by ensuring its safety, security and freedom of movement with unhindered and immediate access throughout the territory of the CAR to enable MINUSCA to carry out fully its mandate in a complex environment including by helping to ensure the full and effective implementation of, and compliance with, the host country agreement (SOFA) by the CAR Authorities;

61. *Calls upon* Member States, especially those in the region, to ensure the free, unhindered and expeditious movement to and from the CAR of all personnel,

as well as equipment, provisions, supplies and other goods, including vehicles and spare parts, which are for the exclusive and official use of MINUSCA;

**Humanitarian access**

62. *Demands* that all parties allow and facilitate the full, safe, immediate and unhindered access for the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations in need, in particular to internally displaced persons, throughout the territory of the CAR, in accordance with the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance and relevant provisions of international law;

63. *Further demands* that all parties ensure respect and protection of all medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities;

**Humanitarian appeal**

64. *Calls on* Member States and international and regional organizations to respond swiftly to the revised humanitarian appeal through increased contributions and to ensure that all pledges are honoured in full and in a timely manner;

**Support to MINUSCA**

65. *Authorises* French armed forces, within the provisions of their existing bilateral agreement with the CAR and the limits of their capacities and areas of deployment, at the request of the Secretary-General, to use all the means to provide operational support to elements of MINUSCA when under serious threat, from the date of adoption of this resolution, and requests France to ensure reporting to the Council on the implementation of this mandate and to coordinate its reporting with that of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 67 of this resolution;

**Review and Reporting**

66. *Requests* the Secretary-General to review on a regular basis the conditions required for the transition, drawdown and withdrawal of the United Nations operation, in a manner which does not prejudice overall efforts to support long term objectives for peace and stability, and looks forward to receiving this information as part of his regular reporting to the Security Council;

67. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed of the situation in the CAR and the implementation of the mandate of MINUSCA, to report to the Council, on 15 February 2018, and then every four months from that date, and to include in his reports to the Council updates on and recommendations related to the dynamic implementation of MINUSCA's mandated tasks, including by providing appropriate financial information, information on the security situation, the priority political elements as defined above on political progress, progress on mechanisms and capacity to advance governance and fiscal management, relevant information on the progress, promotion and protection of human rights and international humanitarian law, a review of the troop and police levels, force and police generation and deployment of all MINUSCA's constituent elements, information on the progress in the implementation of the measures taken to improve MINUSCA's performance, including measures to ensure force effectiveness as outlined in paragraphs 33 to 37 and 45, as well as on the outcomes of the performance review of T/PCCs that will be conducted by MINUSCA no later than the end of the first quarter of 2018;

68. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations A/ES-10/763–S/2017/958

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Security Council

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**General Assembly**
**Tenth emergency special session**
Agenda item 5
**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**Security Council**
**Seventy-second year**

## Identical letters dated 14 November 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you that, in the absence of any serious measures of accountability pursuant to Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) and the countless other relevant United Nations resolutions demanding the cessation of Israel's illegal policies and measures in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, and an end to its more than half-century occupation, the occupying Power continues with its flagrant violations and methodical destruction of the two-State solution.

Following its recent provocative announcements regarding plans for the illegal construction of thousands more settlement units across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Israeli Government is forging ahead with its colonization and annexation schemes and escalating its confiscation of Palestinian land, demolition of Palestinian homes and properties and forced displacement of the Palestinian civilian population. This has included ongoing measures aimed at the forced transfer of thousands of Bedouin Palestinians from their lands. All this is being done in grave breach of international law and in direct and repeated violation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

Earlier in November, demolition orders for approximately 60 homes and structures and evacuation notices were delivered by the Israeli occupying forces to Palestinian residents in the Ein al-Hilweh and Umm al-Jamal villages in the northern Jordan Valley in the Occupied West Bank. If implemented, those orders would result in the dispossession and forced transfer of at least 300 Palestinian civilians from the area, which has been designated for further settlement expansion by the occupying Power. In this regard, recent reports have revealed Israel's intentions to advance settlement construction in the Jordan Valley and to double the number of settlers it has illegally implanted there from 6,000 to at least 12,000.

Palestinian farmers in the village of Shofeh, near Tulkarem, have also received notifications from the Israeli occupying forces of the expropriation of several plots of agricultural land for the expansion of a nearby Israeli settlement and its infrastructure.

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The occupying Power is also moving ahead with plans to confiscate another 50 dunums of Palestinian land in the Bethlehem area, along with numerous other plans for the demolition of Palestinian homes and the seizure of Palestinian properties throughout other areas of the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

It is undeniable that the relentless theft of land and the continual forced dispossession and displacement of the Palestinian civilian population are central to Israel's attempts to alter the demography, character and geographic realities on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and settlement activities are the main vehicle for the implementation of this illegal colonial agenda. Moreover, as all such actions are being perpetrated without consequence, the Israeli Government and its extremist settlers have clearly been further emboldened to continue and even intensify their land grab and crimes against the Palestinian people.

In this regard, we recall the Security Council's unequivocal condemnation, in its resolution 2334 (2016), of "all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, including inter alia, the construction and expansion of settlements, transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians", and the demand that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately and completely cease all settlement activities and that it fully respect all its legal obligations.

In the light of Israel's blatant and deliberate contempt and continuing non-compliance with United Nations resolutions and the applicable provisions of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, we must also recall that the Security Council, in its resolution 2334 (2016), called upon all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. Such distinctions, politically, legally and otherwise, have become ever more urgent as Israel has proven that, in the absence of measures of accountability, it intends to persist with its grave violations against the Palestinian people, with its colonization and attempts at annexation of the Palestinian land, and with its destruction of the viability of the two-State solution.

It is past high time for serious, concrete measures to be adopted by the international community to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its violations and comply with international law and United Nations resolutions. Failure to do so will only allow for the continuation of these crimes against the Palestinian people and the prolongation of the abhorrent occupation, with far-reaching and negative consequences for the prospects for Palestinian-Israeli peace and for peace and stability in the region.

In closing, we highlight the Security Council's declared determination to examine all practical ways and means to secure the full implementation of its relevant resolutions and appeal for immediate action in this regard to ensure the necessary protections for the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation, in accordance with international humanitarian law, and to salvage the remaining prospects for realizing the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and a just and lasting solution, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 620 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432–S/2000/921) to 11 October 2017 (A/ES-10/762–S/2017/855), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being

committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda **Abdelhady-Nasser**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Observer

United Nations S/2017/959

# Security Council

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## Letter dated 14 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 11–14 November 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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## Annex to the letter dated 14 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

## Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (11 November 2017)

### Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 11 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: five in Aleppo, three in Homs, two in Ladhiqiyah and one in Damascus.

The Turkish representative office has reported three violations in the following Governorates: two in Aleppo and one in Damascus.

Most incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

### Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic carried out no humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,674 humanitarian operations have been carried out, with a total weight of 2,287.3 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to two residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 63,777 residents.

### Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, one ceasefire regime agreement was signed with Tall Amiri in Homs Governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 2,266.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus and Qunaytirah Governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

## Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (12 November 2017)

### Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported eight incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: four in Aleppo, one in Ladhiqiyah, one in Homs, one in Dar'a and one in Damascus.

The Turkish representative office has reported six violations in the following Governorates: three in Aleppo, one in Damascus, one in Homs and one in Idlib.

Most incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

### Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation in Ba'th in Qunaytirah Governorate; humanitarian packages with a total weight of 1.5 tons were delivered to the local population.

In total, 1,675 humanitarian operations have been carried out, with a total weight of 2288.8 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 101 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 63,878 residents.

### Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, one ceasefire agreement was signed with Aqarib al-Safi in Hama Governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 2,267.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus and Qunaytirah Governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

## Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (13 November 2017)

### Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported six incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: four in Aleppo, one in Homs and one in Dar'a.

The Turkish representative office has reported nine violations in the following Governorates: four in Aleppo and five in Damascus.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

### Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation in Haqlah in Aleppo Governorate; food packages with a total weight of 1.8 tons were delivered to the local population.

In total, 1,676 humanitarian operations have been carried out, with a total weight of 2,290.7 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 226 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 64,104 residents.

One humanitarian convoy was sent through the United Nations to Duma in Damascus Governorate; food and medicines with a total weight of 129 tons were delivered to the local population.

### Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire regime agreements were signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process remains unchanged at 2,267.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus and Qunaytirah Governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

## Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence on the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (14 November 2017)

### Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported five incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: two in Aleppo, two in Homs and one in Damascus.

The Turkish representative office has reported two violations in Damascus Governorate.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

### Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic carried out no humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,676 humanitarian operations have been carried out, with a total weight of 2,290.7 tons.

No medical assistance was provided over the past 24 hours.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 64,104 residents.

Two humanitarian convoys were sent through the United Nations to Tayybah and Tall al-Dhahab in Dar'a Governorate; food and medicines with a total weight of 154 tons were delivered to the local population.

### Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, two ceasefire regime agreements were signed with Tammunah, in Homs Governorate, and Muflisah, in Aleppo Governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 2,269.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah Governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

United Nations S/2017/960

Security Council

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16 November 2017

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# Identical letters dated 15 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, and further to our previous letters regarding the involvement of the so-called US-led "international coalition" in Syria in relations and deals with the terrorist organization of "ISIL" in order to secure a safe exit for the fighters of this designated group in different parts of Syria, with all their heavy weapons and equipment, I would like to draw your attention to the news report published and broadcast on 13 November 2017 by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), entitled "Raqqa's Dirty Secret" *

The news report was prepared by a BBC crew on the ground, led by its correspondent, Quentin Sommerville. The report contains details of the "secret deal" that facilitated the escape of hundreds of terrorist fighters, many of them foreigners, with their families and their heavy weapons, out of the city of Raqqa, under the gaze and watchful eye of the international coalition forces led by the United States and the United Kingdom and their proxy militias on the ground, in particular the so-called "Syrian Democratic Forces" that currently occupy the city of Raqqa.

The BBC report presents evidence and live testimonies of truck drivers who transported the most vicious foreign terrorist fighters to get them out of Raqqa city, opening the way for them to either deploy in many Syrian areas or find their way back, through Turkey, to the countries that they came from.

The evidence and testimonies contained in the news report prove what the Syrian Government kept telling the Security Council: that the genuine agenda of the so-called "international coalition", which falsely claims to be fighting "ISIL", is to obstruct and undermine Syrian and Russian military operations against "ISIL" and other terrorist organizations.

The gravity of the information and evidence contained in the news report is that, while broad international efforts are focused on combating the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and countering their return to the countries from which they came into Syria and Iraq, some States members of this "international coalition" are still engaging in suspicious deals with the most violent and extremist foreign terrorist fighters, to grant them safe haven and freedom of movement between Syria

* Available from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/raqqas_dirty_secret



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and Iraq and to open roads for them to return and spread terrorism and criminality in every city and region that they can reach.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly believes that it is time for the Security Council to demonstrate its seriousness in implementing its counter-terrorism resolutions, particularly those issued under Chapter VII. For this purpose, the Syrian Government requests that the news report be seriously examined by the Security Council and its counter-terrorism committees, in order to assess the practices of the Governments that participated in this illegal "international coalition", taking into consideration that those practices violate Security Council resolutions relating to combating terrorism, in particular resolution 2368 (2017).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/72/595–S/2017/961

General Assembly
Security Council

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**General Assembly**
**Seventy-second session**
Agenda items 35 and 40

**Security Council**
**Seventy-second year**

**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development**

**The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan**

## Letter dated 10 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey herewith the record of violations of the ceasefire by the Republic of Armenia in October 2017 (see annex).* During the reporting period, Armenia violated the ceasefire regime 1,654 times and continued the use of large-calibre guns and heavy weaponry from its positions in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and from its own territory.

As a result, five servicemen of the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan were wounded during one month.

The continuous occupation of a large part of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the armed forces of Armenia remains the main obstacle in the settlement of the conflict and the only source of the escalation of the situation on the frontline and the occurrence of hostilities and casualties.

The sooner the Republic of Armenia withdraws its troops from the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the sooner peace and stability can be restored in the region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35 and 40, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* The annex is being circulated in the language of submission only.

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## Annex to the letter dated 10 November 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

## Violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia for October 2017*

| *Dates* | *Direction (locality)* | *Weapons used* | *Number of ceasefire violations* | *Casualties and damages* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1–31 October | **Aghdam district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Afatly village | AK | 21 | |
| | Ahmadali | AK | 20 | |
| | Ahmadaghali village | AK/AKM | 32 | |
| | Ayag Garvand village | AK/AKM | 10 | |
| | Chamanly village | AK/AKM | 47 | |
| | Chiragly village | AK/AKM/DShK | 37 | |
| | Evoghlu village | AK | 14 | |
| | Mammadbaghirly village | AK/AKM | 34 | |
| | Mirashilly village | AK/AKM | 18 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM | 79 | |
| | Orta Garvand | AK/AKM/DShK | 36 | |
| | Saryjaly village | AK/AKM | 41 | |
| | Shakhvalilar | AKM | 4 | |
| | Yuzbashly village | AK | 6 | |
| | Zangishaly village | AK | 30 | |
| | **Aghjabadi district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Gyamaddynly village | AK/AKM | 129 | |
| | Mahryzly village | AK | 3 | |
| | Minakhorlu village | AK/AKM | 54 | |
| | **Agstafa district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Kohna Gyshlag village | AK/AKM | 15 | |
| | **Beylagan district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Garadaghly village | AK/AKM | 34 | |
| | **Dashkasan district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Alkhanchally village | AKM | 6 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM | 17 | |
| | Tazakand village | AKM | 5 | |
| | Zivilyan village | AKM | 26 | |
| | **Fizuli district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Ashaghy Abdurrahmanly village | AK/AKM | 99 | |
| | Alkhanly village | AK/AKM | 74 | |

*Abbreviations*: AK, Kalashnikov assault rifle; AKM, modernized Kalashnikov assault rifle; DShK, heavy machine gun; OSV, semi-automatic sniper rifle; PKM, modernized Kalashnikov machine gun; 60-mm M, mortar.

* Settlements of the Republic of Azerbaijan included in this information are under occupation by the Republic of Armenia or situated close to the fire point areas.

| *Dates* | *Direction (locality)* | *Weapons used* | *Number of ceasefire violations* | *Casualties and damages* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Horadiz village | AK/AKM | 31 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM/DShK | 458 | |
| | Shukurbayli village | AK/AKM | 64 | |
| | **Gazakh district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Bala Jafarli village | AK/AKM | 36 | |
| | Farahli village | AK/AKM | 29 | |
| | Jafarli | AKM | 16 | |
| | Gaymagly village | AK/AKM | 30 | |
| | Gushchu Ayrim village | AKM | 13 | |
| | Gyzylhajili village | AK/AKM/DShK | 23 | |
| | Kamarli village | AK/AKM/DShK | 63 | |
| | Mazam village | AKM | 4 | |
| | Musakoy village | AK/DShK | 14 | |
| | Shikhily village | AKM | 2 | |
| | Unnamed heights | AK | 3 | |
| | **Gedebey district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Chalburun | AKM | 2 | |
| | Galakand village | AKM/PKM | 6 | |
| | Gasimaghali village | AKM | 17 | |
| | Goyali village | AKM | 18 | |
| | Mutudara village | AKM | 15 | |
| | Novoivanovka village | AK/AKM/DShK | 27 | |
| | Novosaratovka village | AKM | 18 | |
| | Unnamed heights | AKM | 16 | |
| | Zamanly village | AKM | 35 | |
| | **Goranboy district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Aghjakand village | AKM | 7 | |
| | Bashgishlag village | AKM/DShK | 13 | |
| | Borsunlu village | AK/AKM | 75 | |
| | Damirchilar village | AK/AKM | 19 | |
| | Gargujag village | AKM | 25 | |
| | Gulustan village | AK/AKM/DShK | 60 | |
| | Gyrmyzysaggallar village | AK/AKM | 7 | |
| | Kharkhaput village | AK/AKM | 20 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM/DShK | 50 | |
| | Tapgaragoyunlu village | AK/AKM | 100 | |
| | Unnamed positions | AK/AKM/DShK | 32 | |
| | Yenikand village | AK/AKM | 32 | |
| | Yukhari Agjakend village | AKM | 7 | |
| | Zeyva village | AK/AKM | 60 | |
| | **Goygol district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Azgilli village | AK | 1 | |
| | Gazandurmaz | AKM | 4 | |

| *Dates* | *Direction (locality)* | *Weapons used* | *Number of ceasefire violations* | *Casualties and damages* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kurdalylar village | AKM | 36 | |
| | Opposite positions | AKM | 12 | |
| | Pirverdilar village | AKM | 10 | |
| | **Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Ahmadalilar | AK | 7 | |
| | Jojug Marjanli village | AK | 30 | |
| | Lala Ilahi heights | AK | 54 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM | 15 | |
| | **Khojavand district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM | 223 | Two servicemen of the armed forces of Azerbaijan were wounded |
| | Unnamed heights | AK/AKM | 34 | |
| | **Tartar district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Chayly village | AK/AKM/60-mm M | 105 | |
| | Damirchilar village | AK/AKM | 19 | |
| | Gapanly village | AK/AKM | 65 | |
| | Gaynag village | AK | 3 | |
| | Gazyan village | AK/AKM | 31 | |
| | Hasangaya village | AK/AKM/DShK | 95 | |
| | Husanli | AK | 12 | |
| | Jamilly village | AK | 11 | |
| | Karmiravan village | AKM | 34 | |
| | Seyidimli | AKM | 4 | |
| | Opposite positions | AK/AKM/DShK | 116 | |
| | Tazakand village | AK | 27 | |
| | Unnamed positions | AK | 3 | |
| | **Tovuz district, Azerbaijan** | | | |
| | Aghdam village | AK/AKM | 39 | |
| | Aghbulag village | AK/AKM | 29 | |
| | Alibayli village | AK/AKM | 19 | |
| | Asryk Jirdakhan village | AKM/DShK | 8 | Two servicemen of the armed forces of Azerbaijan were wounded |
| | Garalar village | AK/AKM/DShK | 5 | |
| | Hajaly village | AKM | 3 | |
| | Kokhanaby village | AK/AKM | 35 | |
| | Munjuglu village | AK/AKM | 57 | One serviceman of the armed forces of Azerbaijan was wounded |
| | Unnamed heights | AKM/OSV | 25 | |

United Nations S/2017/962

Security Council

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**France, Italy, Japan, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution**

*The Security Council*,

*Recalling* its Resolutions 2319 (2016), 2314 (2016) 2235 (2015), 2253 (2015), 2209 (2015), 2178 (2014), 2118 (2013), 1989 (2011), 1540 (2004) and 1267 (1999),

*Expressing grave concern* regarding the additional allegations of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic which are being investigated by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW),

*Condemning* in the strongest terms any use of any toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and *expressing grave concern* that civilians continue to be killed and injured by toxic chemicals used as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic,

*Reaffirming* that the use of chemical weapons constitutes a serious violation of international law and *reiterating* that those individuals, entities, groups or governments responsible for any use of chemical weapons must be held accountable,

*Recalling* that the FFM is not mandated to reach conclusions about attributing responsibility for chemical weapons use,

*Taking note* of the third, fourth and seventh reports of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), and in particular the recent findings of the seventh report and its conclusions,

*Noting* that the Syrian Arab Republic has suggested the FFM and the Joint Investigative Mechanism visit Khan Shaykhun and Shayrat airbase, and *noting* that the JIM visited Shayrat airbase on 8–10 October, 2017,

*Recalling* that in resolution 2118 (2013) the Security Council underscored that no party in Syria should use, develop, produce, acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer chemical weapons and decided that member States shall inform immediately the Security Council of any violations of resolution 1540 (2004), including acquisition by non-State actors of chemical weapons, their means of delivery and related materials in order to take necessary measures therefor,

*Noting* the importance of the JIM working in an independent, impartial and professional manner in implementing its mandate,

*Recalling* paragraph 6 of resolution 2235 (2015) whereby the Security Council requested the United Nations Secretary-General, in coordination with the OPCW Director-General, to undertake the steps, measures, and arrangements necessary for the full functioning of the JIM, including the recruitment of impartial and experienced staff with relevant expertise in accordance with the Terms of Reference,

*Recalling* the decisions taken by the Security Council in resolutions 2118 (2013), 2209 (2015) and 2235 (2015) that in the event of future non-compliance with resolution 2118 (2013), the Security Council will impose measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter,

*Reaffirming* its grave concern that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), and other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with ISIL (Da'esh) or Al-Qaida, including but not limited to foreign terrorist fighters who have joined ISIL (Da'esh) in Syria, groups that have pledged allegiance to ISIL (Da'esh), and Al-Nusra Front (ANF), continue operating in the Syrian Arab Republic,

*Recalling* the decision of the OPCW Executive Council EC-86/DEC.9 dated 13 October 2017, which encouraged States Parties to share, according to their national laws and as appropriate, information related to cases of development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, as well as completed domestic investigations conducted with regard to chemical weapons, including information on any subsequent criminal or other legal proceedings undertaken,

*Recalling* that resolution 2319 (2016) encouraged the JIM, where relevant, to consult appropriate United Nations counter-terrorism and non-proliferation bodies, in particular, the 1540 Committee and the 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, in order to exchange information on non-State actors' perpetration, organization, sponsorship, or other involvement in the use of chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic where the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission determines or has determined that a specific incident in the Syrian Arab Republic involved or likely involved the use of chemical weapons,

*Recalling* paragraph 7 of resolution 2319 (2016), including with respect to the ability of the JIM to examine additional information and evidence that was not obtained or prepared by the FFM but that is relevant to the mandate of the JIM,

1. *Decides* to renew the mandate of the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) as set out in resolution 2235 (2015) for a further period of 12 months from the date of adoption of this resolution, with a possibility of further extension by the Security Council if it deems it necessary;

2. *Recalls* its decision that the Syrian Arab Republic shall not use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, or transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to other States or non-State actors;

3. *Further recalls* that no party in Syria shall use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain, or transfer chemical weapons;

4. *Reaffirms* paragraphs 1, 3–4, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 15 of resolution 2235 (2015);

5. *Reaffirms* paragraphs 4–7 of resolution 2319 (2016);

6. *Reaffirms* support to the FFM and JIM as they undertake their respective investigations in a manner they deem appropriate to fulfil their mandate, *acknowledges* the dangers associated with investigating chemical weapon use in Syria, and *highlights* the importance of full coordination with the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General to Syria, the United Nations Department

of Safety and Security, and the OPCW, to ensure the FFM and JIM can safely travel to sites relevant to their investigations and where they determine there are reasonable grounds to believe access is justified based on their assessment of the facts and circumstances known to them at the time;

7. *Reaffirms* paragraph 9 of resolution 2235 (2015), that the FFM should collaborate with the JIM to provide full access to all of the information and evidence obtained or prepared by the FFM, including, but not limited to, medical records, interview tapes and transcripts, and documentary material, *further reaffirms* that the JIM should work in coordination with the FFM to fulfil its mandate, and *requests* that the Secretary-General make the necessary arrangements for the JIM to liaise closely with the FFM to expeditiously investigate any incident the FFM determines involved or likely involved the use of chemicals as weapons in order to identify those involved in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 of its resolution 2235 (2015);

8. *Underscores* the ongoing importance of the JIM conducting its investigations according to high methodological standards and basing its findings on the evidentiary levels outlined in paragraph 20 of the first JIM report (S/2016/142);

9. *Calls upon* all parties within the Syrian Arab Republic, including State and non-State actors, to provide full cooperation with the FFM and JIM, and to facilitate immediate and unfettered, safe and secure access to witnesses, evidence, reporting, material and sites the JIM and FFM deem relevant within the scope of their mandate, in order for the FFM and the JIM to accomplish their mandates, *further calls upon* all parties to pause hostilities in the areas in which the FFM and the JIM require access, to enable where possible safe access for the FFM and the JIM to such sites they may judge necessary for fulfilment of their mandates, and *encourages* the JIM to inform the Security Council in case the JIM is unable to safely access sites that it deems relevant to its investigation;

10. *Encourages* the JIM, where relevant, to consult and cooperate with appropriate United Nations counter-terrorism and non-proliferation bodies, to exchange information on non-State actors' perpetration, organization, sponsorship or other involvement in the use of chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, where the FFM determines or has determined that a specific incident in the Syrian Arab Republic involved or likely involved the use of chemical weapons;

11. *Requests* the JIM to complete a report within 90 days of adoption of this resolution, and complete subsequent reports as appropriate thereafter, *further requests* the Joint Investigative Mechanism to present the report, or reports, to the United Nations Security Council and inform the OPCW Executive Council, and *invites* the JIM to brief, as appropriate, the 1540 Committee, the 1267/1989/2253 Committee or other relevant counter-terrorism or non-proliferation bodies on relevant results of their work;

12. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2017/963

Security Council

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17 November 2017

Original: English

# Report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016

1. The present report covers developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 29 September 2017 and is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2348 (2017), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to update it in writing every 45 days on political and technical progress in and obstacles to the implementation of the Comprehensive and Inclusive Political Agreement signed on 31 December 2016.

## I. Key political developments related to the implementation of the agreement

### National developments

2. Challenges related to the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016 persisted throughout the reporting period. The broad consensus among key political actors that had underpinned the signing of the agreement continued to erode, as clearly demonstrated by the persistent disagreement and suspicions between the ruling presidential majority and the opposition platform, the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales de la République démocratique du Congo acquises au changement, regarding the establishment and functioning of the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process, the implementation of the confidence-building measures envisaged in the agreement, and the electoral calendar.

3. Discussions have been centred on the notion that elections will not be held before the end of 2017, as envisaged in the 31 December 2016 agreement. This has increased political uncertainty in a deteriorating socioeconomic, human rights and humanitarian context and a political climate marked by the utilization of increasingly politicized discourse by armed groups, particularly in the Kivu Provinces.

4. Proceedings of the new ordinary session of the National Assembly, which commenced on 15 September, have been impeded on several occasions by disagreements between the ruling majority and the opposition on issues related to the political and security situation and the electoral process. From 6 October to 1 November, opposition members of Parliament suspended their participation in plenary sessions of the Assembly, with the presidential majority using incidental motions to block no-confidence motions against the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior and Security and the Minister of Justice, both of whom are part of the ruling majority. On 20 October, opposition members of Parliament submitted a



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petition against the Speaker of the National Assembly, Aubin Minaku, accusing him of being partial and undermining parliamentary oversight. On 21 October, the petition was blocked through an incidental motion. The Speaker suggested that the question of whether incidental motions could block motions of no confidence should be resubmitted to the Constitutional Court. In 2016, the Court had declared itself incompetent to rule on this matter, arguing that it pertained to the internal rules and regulations of the Assembly.

5. In meetings with civil society representatives in Kinshasa on 10 October and opposition members on 11 October, the President of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Corneille Nangaa, stated that 504 days would be required to prepare for elections once voter registration was completed in January 2018. Between 12 and 16 October, a number of civil society organizations and opposition groups, including the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC), the Rassemblement and the Union pour la nation congolaise (UNC) condemned Mr. Nangaa's statement and urged the Commission to hold elections in 2018 shortly after the completion of the voter registration process. The Chair of the Rassemblement, Félix Tshisekedi, in remarks to the press, reiterated his call for a political transition without the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila, and for a restructuring of the Commission. In a letter submitted to the National Assembly on 12 October, President Kabila urged the Assembly to consider several bills under urgent procedure, including the draft bill on the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process, the revised electoral law and a bill on public order management.

6. The second tripartite meeting among the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process and the Government to evaluate the electoral process was held in Kinshasa from 14 to 18 October. The final communiqué of the meeting, issued on 18 October, urged the Commission and the Government to bring in-country voter registration to a conclusion and recommended that the Commission begin the registration of members of the diaspora for the presidential elections. The communiqué also encouraged the Government to continue financing the electoral process; thanked external partners for their technical and logistical support and called upon them to provide financial support for the elections in line with the Democratic Republic of the Congo electoral support project managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and urged the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to work together with the Commission in determining logistical support requirements. In addition, the communiqué took note of the pre-electoral phases after the completion of voter registration and requested that the Commission publish a realistic electoral calendar, in line with the Constitution and the 31 December 2016 agreement.

7. On 23 October in Kinshasa, the President of UNC, Vital Kamerhe, issued a communiqué announcing the party's decision to withdraw its representative Pierre Kangudia Mbayi, Minister of State in Charge of the Budget, from the Government. Mr. Kamerhe stated that the decision had been made in protest of the delays in the publication of the electoral calendar and the "inevitable postponement" of the elections until after December 2017, in violation of the 31 December 2016 agreement. On 24 October, in remarks to the press, Mr. Minaku questioned the rationale behind Mr. Kamerhe's decision, noting that UNC, as a party to the negotiations leading to the signing of the agreements of 18 October and 31 December 2016, was aware of the possibility that the elections might be postponed until after 2017. On the same date, at a press conference in Kinshasa, Mr. Mbayi rejected the decision of UNC, arguing that his resignation could lead to a crisis in the Government and weaken opposition ministers.

8. On 30 October, civil society organizations staged protests in several cities across the Democratic Republic of the Congo demanding that President Kabila step down by December 2017. In Goma, the protests turned violent, resulting in the deaths of 3 civilians and 2 Congolese National Police officers, the wounding of 15 civilians and 4 members of national security forces, and the arrest of 37 protesters.

9. On 5 November, at a press conference in Kinshasa, Mr. Nangaa announced that, in keeping with the relevant provisions of the 31 December 2016 agreement, presidential and legislative national and provincial elections would be held on 23 December 2018. He noted that the support of international partners would be required in order to meet the deadlines for holding the elections. Mr. Tshisekedi rejected the electoral calendar, arguing that it violated the Constitution and the agreement, and called on the people to remove President Kabila from power. The former Governor of Katanga Province, Moïse Katumbi, and the Secretary-General of MLC, Eve Bazaiba, rejected the calendar, describing it as provocative and non-consensual. Mr. Minaku called on all the political stakeholders to strive to meet the electoral deadlines and argued that the electoral calendar published by the Independent National Electoral Commission was in line with the agreement, which provided for the possibility of postponing elections until after December 2017 following a joint assessment of the electoral process by the Commission, the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process and the Government. On 7 November, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, urged all Congolese stakeholders to play their part in ensuring strict respect for the electoral calendar.

**Regional developments**

10. Regional actors continued to engage with regard to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in support of efforts to bridge the divides among the signatories to the 31 December 2016 agreement. From 28 September to 1 October, Mr. Mahamat visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, meeting with representatives of the relevant Congolese institutions and opposition members signatories to the agreement. He encouraged his interlocutors to overcome their disagreements in order to promote an environment conducive to a peaceful and consensual electoral process, in line with the Constitution and the agreement. He committed himself to strengthening the support provided by the African Union, in coordination with all relevant national and international actors. Mr. Mahamat's visit was followed by a visit by the African Union Peace and Security Council to the country from 22 to 26 October.

11. On 15 October, the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, visited Kinshasa. Presidents Kabila and Zuma, in a joint communiqué, reiterated their support for the decisions made at the thirty-seventh summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In the final communiqué of the summit, SADC Heads of State and Government had, inter alia, taken note of the requirement to postpone elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo until after December 2017.

12. On 19 October, the Heads of State and Government of the countries signatory to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region held the eighth high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in Brazzaville. The final communiqué of the meeting noted that, despite delays in its implementation, the 31 December 2016 political agreement remained the viable framework for ending the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and underlined the need to implement the confidence-building measures envisaged therein. The communiqué commended the significant progress achieved in the voter registration process, underscored the need for the early publication of a consensual electoral calendar and an electoral budget, and encouraged the

Government to ensure the adoption of the requisite electoral legislation. In addition, it welcomed the decision of SADC to appoint a special envoy to support the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and also welcomed the outcome of the meeting on the country that had been held on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September.

## II. Key developments related to the implementation of the agreement

### Electoral developments

13. The Independent National Electoral Commission continued to make progress towards the finalization of voter registration with the start of registration in the remaining areas, namely, Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces and two territories of Lomami Province. MONUSCO and UNDP continued to provide support for the process.

14. As at 24 October, 60 per cent of registration centres were operational (registration centres have to remain open for 90 days). As at 10 October, the Independent National Electoral Commission had reported the registration of more than 42 million potential voters countrywide. Women represent 47 per cent of the currently registered electorate.

### Restrictions on political space and violence as they relate to the implementation of the agreement in the electoral context

15. MONUSCO continued to document violations of civil and political rights as well as fundamental freedoms during the reporting period. In September 2017, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office documented 112 violations, bringing to 708 the number of human rights violations documented since the beginning of 2017 with regard to restrictions of democratic space. State agents continue to be responsible for most of the most recent violations, including 52 by the Congolese National Police, 27 by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 10 by the National Intelligence Agency and 9 by political/administrative authorities. Violations consist mainly of arbitrary arrests and detentions and violations of the rights to the freedoms of opinion, expression and peaceful assembly. Seventy-seven human rights defenders and six journalists were victims of human rights violations. Most of the perpetrators of such violations continue to benefit from impunity, with no significant follow-ups or convictions in these cases recorded.

### Confidence-building measures

16. Progress achieved in the implementation of the confidence-building measures remained insufficient. On 22 and 23 October, in the context of the visit of Felix Tshisekedi to Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga Province, the Congolese National Police and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo arrested approximately 80 militants, including 6 women and 50 members of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, at the headquarters of the opposition party in that city. The Mayor of Lubumbashi had not authorized any activity in relation to the visit, including meetings with local militants of the Rassemblement. In a press release issued on 23 October, my Special Representative condemned those arrests, expressed deep concern about the ongoing acts of intimidation against opposition members, called for the immediate and unconditional release of those arbitrarily arrested, and reminded the Congolese authorities of their obligation to respect the fundamental freedoms and civil and political rights of all persons, in accordance with the Constitution and the international obligations of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 24 October, all those arrested were released, including 32 persons on bail.

17. The Congolese authorities continue to enforce the general ban on opposition demonstrations that has been in place since September 2016. Such prohibitions were strengthened during the reporting period in several localities, including Bunia, Ituri Province; Mbuji-Mayi, Kasai Oriental Province; and Lubumbashi. On 29 September, authorities in Ituri Province prohibited a demonstration by the civil society platform Collectif d'actions de la société civile with respect to the publication of the electoral calendar. On 30 September, the Congolese National Police arbitrarily arrested 49 members of the Collectif in Goma and Kisangani who had been gathering in front of the Independent National Electoral Commission. The 16 persons arrested in Kisangani were released after being detained for 12 hours by the Congolese National Police, while the 33 persons arrested in Goma were released on 3 October. As at 27 October, 133 political prisoners and prisoners of opinion were held in detention facilities across the country, more than double the number of individuals in the same category detained a year ago.

## III. Good offices efforts for the implementation of the agreement and regional developments

18. In pursuit of his good offices mandate in support of the implementation of the 31 December 2016 agreement, my Special Representative continued to hold separate meetings with key stakeholders, including the Government, the National Council for Monitoring the Agreement and the Electoral Process, the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Rassemblement, the Group of Seven, the presidential majority and civil society. My Special Representative also continued to engage with representatives of the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, SADC, the Economic Community of Central African States and key regional actors. Discussions revolved around ways to promote the implementation of the agreement to pave the way for the holding of peaceful and credible elections as soon as possible. In particular, discussions were focused on the need for the swift publication of the electoral calendar, the adoption of the requisite legislation on elections and the National Council, the funding of the electoral process, the implementation of confidence-building measures, respect for fundamental freedoms, and the need for enhanced coordination within the international community in support of the electoral process.

## IV. Observations

19. Despite the mounting levels of disagreement between its signatories regarding its implementation, the political agreement of 31 December 2016 remains the framework guiding the political transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This was most recently reaffirmed at the meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism held in Brazzaville and continues to be acknowledged by Congolese interlocutors across the political spectrum. At this critical juncture, with the end of 2017 a few weeks away, a renewed political commitment is required to rebuild trust among all political actors, and between the political class and Congolese citizens, in order to identify a consensual way forward, in line with the agreement and the Constitution. I remind the national authorities of the great responsibility that they bear in demonstrating continued political will and ensuring that the agreement is respected. The opposition has an important role in finding solutions to the political crisis and preserving stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

20. I welcome the efforts of regional partners, including the African Union and SADC, to promote inclusive dialogue on the implementation of the political agreement. I encourage regional actors to enhance their engagement in order to help

all Congolese stakeholders overcome their differences and ensure that the Congolese authorities prepare the ground for credible elections, in a timely manner, in line with the agreement and the aspirations of the Congolese people.

21. I have taken note of the calendar published by the Independent National Electoral Commission on 5 November 2017. While it is regrettable that the crucial polls have been postponed, yet again, I reaffirm the availability of the United Nations to work in coordination with the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and SADC to establish an independent team of experts to provide technical support to the Commission as required in support of this process. I call on the Government, the presidential majority and the opposition to play a constructive role in meeting the deadlines set out in the electoral calendar.

22. I welcome the progress achieved on voter registration and urge the Independent National Electoral Commission to bring this process to a successful conclusion within the earliest possible time frame. The opening of the remaining registration centres in the Kasai region as soon as possible will be a key step towards completing this process in a timely manner. I call upon the Government and Parliament to ensure the adoption of the electoral legislation and urge the Government to continue to disburse the necessary financial allocations to the Commission in a timely manner. I also encourage the international community to provide adequate support for the electoral process.

23. I urge the Government to fully implement the confidence-building measures set out in the 31 December 2016 political agreement, and to respect all the political rights and freedoms of Congolese citizens enshrined in the Congolese Constitution and in accordance with the international obligations of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since the signing of the agreement, 64 political prisoners have been released. However, I am deeply concerned that Congolese citizens continue to be arbitrarily arrested and illegally detained for expressing their political opinions. At least 133 of them remain in detention for such reasons. I stress the importance of releasing all persons detained arbitrarily, including human rights defenders and opposition members. I am concerned that journalists, political opponents and civil society activists remain subject to intimidation and violence in relation to their political activities.

24. I call on the Government to ensure that all Congolese citizens, regardless of their political affiliation, can participate freely in public affairs and fully exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. I also call on the relevant authorities to ensure that all violations of such rights and freedoms are brought to an immediate halt and that the perpetrators are held to account. Respecting fundamental rights and freedoms, and combating impunity, are of paramount importance to create the conditions necessary for the holding of peaceful and credible elections.

25. Bringing the electoral process to a successful conclusion in a consensual and timely manner and in line with the 31 December 2016 agreement is essential to preserve the gains achieved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo over the past decade. I therefore call on all Congolese stakeholders to rebuild trust among themselves, instil confidence in the political process and place the interests of the country and the people at the forefront. As the end of the year approaches, it is crucial that a consensual way forward, which places peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the centre, be found without further delay.